Allegory and the Art of Memory

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Abstract

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Scholars of early modern literature often consider allegory inherently idealist, particularly in its exploitation of visual description, which, they argue, produces a spurious vividness that tries to pass off the schematic and the ideal as natural. Critics who subscribe to this view often celebrate Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (1590/96) as both a pinnacle of the genre and a skeptical anatomy of it—a great allegory that is great *because* it exposes allegory's illusions. As the argument goes, Spenser reveals the false visuality at the heart of allegory by complicating his imagery with naturalistic description. By turning allegorical images against themselves, the poem prevents allegory from subordinating the world of matter and appearances to a timeless conceptual order.

This dissertation, *Allegory and the Art of Memory*, offers an alternative framework for understanding allegory's visuality and Spenser's use of it: the mental visualization techniques of the classical and medieval memory arts. Because these mnemonic methods draw mental imagery into the service of memorizing words and ideas, they too have been accused of visual bad faith, but recent scholarship has excavated the practical and philosophical contexts in which these methods were used, and this visual regime gives us a new way to think about allegorical imagery as well. I argue that in adapting the memory arts to narrative poetry, medieval allegorists did not aspire to impress an idealist image of cosmic harmony upon the empirical world but to lead readers through a voluntary and collaborative process of composing meditative imagery.

In the following pages, I analyze three pre-Spenserian allegorical poems particularly engaged with the theory and practice of memory: Guillaume de Deguileville's *Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine* (1330-32), Olivier de la Marche's *Le Chevalier Délibéré* (1483), and Stephan Batman's loose adaptation of *Le Chevalier Délibéré* into *The Trauayled Pylgrime* (1569). I use these analyses to illuminate crucial episodes of *The Faerie Queene* to show that, rather than revealing the fissures in the earlier poems' methods, *The Faerie Queene* continues their project by adapting allegory to the transformed media environment of sixteenth-century England, where the visual mnemonics of the memory arts had mostly been discarded. The pre-Spenserian poems I analyze borrow formal elements from mnemonic techniques while critically evaluating the practices and the role of memory in human life. *The Faerie Queene*, I argue, follows their trajectory into the age of print. Whereas the older poems treat their imagery as a

script for composing mental images, Spenser uses the formal tropes of the memory arts—image (*imago*), place (*locus*), and order (*ordo*)—to represent memory-processes, not just of the individual but of an entire culture, a collective record that is both analogous to memory and radically unaccommodating to the human mind.

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Introduction
Medieval Memory and the Renaissance Poet

Allegory has an ambivalent relationship with imagery. Its advocates praise it for making ideas vividly present to the mind and putting them "before the eyes," while its critics deprecate its imagery as bloodless and inimical to naturalistic detail. Others combine these two positions, attributing to allegory a spurious vividness that tries to pass off the schematic and the ideal as natural. Allegory is often considered inherently idealist, its gestures toward mimesis serving only to conceal the complications and conflicts of the material world under an image of timeless harmony. For many such critics, Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (1590/6) both redeems and demolishes allegory: redeems it by being so much more interesting than the common rout of allegorical poems, and destroys it by preventing us from ever again accepting allegory's naive (and indeed pernicious) equation of images to ideas. As the argument goes, Spenser exposes the false visuality at the heart of allegory by complicating his imagery with naturalistic description. By turning images against themselves, the poem prevents the allegory from subordinating the world of matter and appearances to a timeless conceptual order.

This critical perspective on allegory and *The Faerie Queene* pits schema and stereotype against naturalism—but these terms imply that verbal imagery produces meaning much the same way as physical picture-making. This dissertation offers an alternative framework for understanding allegory's visuality: the mental visualization techniques of the classical and medieval memory arts.[1] Because practitioners of the memory arts use mental imagery to index memorized words and ideas, the memory arts too have been accused of visual bad faith, but scholarship of the past few decades has revised our understanding of what we might call the memory arts' visual regime by excavating the practical and philosophical contexts in which these techniques were used.[2] These more complete descriptions of the memory arts give us a new way to think about allegorical imagery as well, and thus a new way of positioning *The Faerie Queene* in the tradition of allegorical poetry. I argue that in adapting the memory arts to narrative poetry, medieval allegorists did not aspire to impress an idealist image of cosmic harmony upon the empirical world but to lead readers through a voluntary and collaborative process of composing mnemonic mental imagery. Indeed, modern critiques of allegory echo sixteenth-century backformations medieval allegory by pedagogical and religious reformers who attributed a coercive quality to allegory (and a passivity to its readers) that medieval allegorists would not have recognized. In the following pages, I analyze three pre-Spenserian allegorical poems particularly engaged with the theory and practice of memory. I then use these analyses to illuminate crucial episodes of *The Faerie Queene* to show that, rather than revealing the fissures in the earlier poems' methods, *The Faerie Queene* continues their project by adapting allegory to the changing values and practices of scholarly memory. These pre-Spenserian poems—Guillaume de

[1] Imagery-based mnemonics go under many names, including the *ars memorativa, ars memoriae,* artificial memory, mnemotechnics, memory-training, or simply *memoria*. I reserve "memory arts" as an umbrella term for all mnemonic imagery methods that descend from the Roman rhetorical tradition.

[2] As I will show, these include theories of cognition that treat mental images as material phenomena and psychic processes as material, as well as reading and composition practices that require texts to be memorized and made "familiar" before they can be profited from.

Deguileville's *Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine* (1330-32), Olivier de la Marche's *Le Chevalier Délibéré* (1483), and Stephan Batman's loose adaptation of *Le Chevalier Délibéré* into *The Trauayled Pylgrime* (1569)—critically evaluate both the practices and the role of memory in human life while also basing formal elements on mnemonic techniques. *The Faerie Queene*, I will argue, follows their trajectory into the transformed media environment of sixteenth-century England, where the visual mnemonics of the memory arts had mostly been discarded.

Spenser studies has been dominated by the idea that Spenser is both an exemplary practitioner and a skeptical anatomist of allegory. The two most influential representatives of this position are Angus Fletcher and Gordon Teskey, and although Fletcher's book predates Teskey's by thirty years, they share several broad conclusions. These two critics credit Spenser with some of the greatest insights into allegory as a form but also characterize him as a covert critic of allegory who chafes against and thereby exposes allegory's limitations. Both critics claim that allegory itself has basic tendencies—Teskey calls them "desires"—to which it always wants to revert despite any "resistance" put up by individual practitioners. And these tendencies, Fletcher and Teskey broadly agree, include the enforcement of both social and philosophical power relations—between women and men, subjects and rulers, and matter and spirit or abstract form. Allegory, they argue, coerces the material world into representing immaterial principles and imposes this metaphysical world-picture on its readers.

Most importantly for our purposes, Teskey and Fletcher identify this form of representation—which is really *mis*representation—with visuality. Allegory, they each claim in their own way, makes false claims for allegorical language's ability to bypass cognition and induce direct sight of what in ordinary life would be invisible. Fletcher calls allegory's visuality "diagrammatic"—in other words, representing what is actually a function of time (lived experience, history, social order, natural processes, thought) as a spatial simultaneity. Although writing in a De Manian theoretical framework, Teskey claims that allegory's principal "illusion" is its insistence on the "abstract authority of visual forms" over nature's rebellious tendency to change over time. For both critics, allegory's visuality is one of delusive fixity and abstraction. It is this notion of allegory's bad-faith visuality that attention to the memory arts allows us to revise. I will argue that allegory borrows its relation of language to image from the visual regime of the memory arts, which differs in key ways from the one attributed to allegory by Fletcher, Teskey, and critics who inherit their positions. From this memory arts perspective, I will show that Spenser's *Faerie Queene* doesn't stage a resistance to allegory so much as it renegotiates allegory's relationship to scholarly memory practices in a period when those practices were radically changing.

The memory arts use images to organize a body of concepts, as we can see from a brief overview of the method as described by Cicero, for whom *memoria* was one of the five canons of rhetoric. Cicero explains that objects of the senses stick more stubbornly in our minds than ideas or words, and so *memoria* trains the notoriously unreliable memory to recall the proofs, tropes and figures essential to rhetoric by systematically associating them with mental images. Cicero's *memoria* makes use of three elements that classical rhetoricians call image (*imago*), place (*locus*), and order (*ordo*). First, the orator divides his speech into topic headings, then attaches each topic to a mental image. Each image is then visualized inside a place—a familiar location such as a a field, a room, a courtyard, a

plaza, a street—also itself an image, but one that functions as a container, a background for the object in the foreground. As part of his training, the novice orator would choose a series of such familiar locations, study them to craft vivid images of them in his mind, and memorize them in a specific order as a sort of alphabet he could reuse by dropping new images into the backgrounds. As he delivers his speech, he moves through the order of places in his mind's eye, retrieving each image and its associated topic. One by one, the backgrounds draw forth the images and the images draw forth the topics like gems on a chain. In this method, *imago, locus,* and *ordo* collaborate—neither is sufficient on its own, but each guarantees the security of the other. The material memory-image is fragile and requires the syntactic structure of order to maintain its integrity; order needs images to be realized as order; and the memory-place, itself an image, acts as a joint between the memory-image and its position in the order, between the sensory and the abstract.

Before I relate this method to allegory, though, I must deal with a problem: at first glance, the memory arts do seem subject to the same critiques Teskey and Fletcher level against allegory. These memory-images in their circumscribed places arranged into linear order sound very much like the fixed or frozen images Fletcher describes as central to allegory. Fletcher invokes Peacham's definition of allegory as a "constellation"—individual metaphors (likened in their "lively" visuality to stars) arranged into a pattern—and argues that this pattern in fact diminishes their liveliness. "Usually," he writes, "the metaphor is a record of direct sense experience . . . . When metaphors are deliberately tied into each other, this situation alters. The addition of every new figure diminishes the surprise for the reader, and the whole is increasingly abstracted from sense experience."[3] The same might be argued of the memory arts. If allegory is indeed mnemonic, allegory's "images" would seem to lead away from the friction and novelty of sense-perception and toward the visual schema that disavows its dependence on matter and the senses. "[The weaknesses of allegory] may be summed up in one word," Fletcher writes: "'anesthesia.'"[4]

But classical rhetoricians would not have distinguished so sharply between direct perception of the material world and the image that is manipulated by the intellect. For classical philosophers, an image in the memory is not abstracted from the empirical world but a mark of that world on the body. Thought needs images in all their materiality—Aristotle says "the soul never thinks without an image."[5] He distinguishes between intellect, perception, memory and imagination, but the latter three (what Aristotle calls the organic faculties) all handle sensory impressions or *phantasmata*, either capturing them (perception), storing them (memory), or re-presenting them to the mind's eye (imagination)—and the intellect depends on all three. It must have *phantasmata* to manipulate, for instance when we think of the triangle as a mathematical object but must imagine a specific triangle to do so.[6] Thus the memory and imagination (what Aristotle calls *phantasia*) act as a nexus between the "lower" organic and "higher" intellectual faculties. As a direct record of impressions received by the senses, memory furnishes the material precondition for thought.

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[3] Angus Fletcher, *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1964), 77.
[4] Fletcher, 367–68.
[5] Aristotle, *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), 594 (De anima 431a).
[6] Aristotle, 608 (De memoria et reminiscentia 450a).

Moreover, Aristotle has no notion of a "raw" pre-interpretive sensation that is later abstracted or fixed by the memory. He compares both sensation and memory to the imprint of a signet ring in wax, the object's form instantiated in the matter of the soul—and so a *phantasma* is less like a photograph and more like a carved seal, whose design is neither entirely linguistic nor entirely aesthetic. These *phantasmata* can be manipulated by the higher faculties because the material world already possesses the forms native to intellect. And just as the world is partially made of intellect, the soul is partially made of matter, so that every step of the soul's transaction with the world is material. Indeed, Aristotle grants words and images equal access to *phantasmata* in the memory, since those *phantasmata* already have a formal or linguistic quality to them. To say a word is to invoke a *phantasm* linked to that word, one with a true likeness to the object of sensation that produced it, and a durable presence in the memory that can be strengthened, not diminished, with frequent repetitions of the word for that object. Fletcher (and indeed most critics) worry about the naïve elision of visual description with direct sight,[7] but classical rhetoricians saw more continuity than difference between the two. When Quintilian recommends that orators move their audiences with descriptions that possess vividness or *enargeia*, he tells them to picture the scene themselves, suggesting that the orator need simply describe that inner sight as if he were really seeing it—because he is, in a sense, actually *seeing* it—and then his words will elicit the same *phantasmata* in the minds of his listeners as he himself sees internally. This presumes that inner sight is more or less an attenuated version of outer sight, and that words are connected to *phantasmata* in a non-idiosyncratic way so that they can act as an inner visual language with the same transactional capacity as verbal language.[8]

Thus it is more difficult for allegory's detractors to argue that the idea assimilates its image into an immaterial significance. That claim is the basis for the notion that the more naturalistic a description, the harder it is for allegory to saturate every detail with its noetic *telos*, and so as they multiply, such details "resist" allegory's inherent idealist tendencies. But let us look at how Cicero describes the relationship of image to idea in the memory arts:

> . . . ea maxime animis effingi nostris, quae essent a sensu tradita atque impressa; acerrimum autem ex omnibus nostris sensibus esse sensum videndi; qua re facillime animo teneri posse ea, quae perciperentur auribus aut cogitatione, si etiam commendatione oculorum animis traderentur; ut res caecas et ab aspectus iudicio remotas conformatio argquaedam et imago et figura ita notaret, ut ea, quae cogitando complecti vix possemus, intuendo quasi teneremus.
>
> (. . . the things best pictured by our minds are those that have been conveyed and imprinted on them by one of the senses. Now the keenest of all our senses is the sense of sight. Therefore, things perceived by our hearing or during our thought processes can be most easily grasped by the mind, if they are also conveyed to our minds through the mediation of the eyes. In this way . . . invisible objects that are inaccessible to the judgment of sight are represented by a kind of figure, an

[7] Fletcher, *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode*, 97–98.

[8] I owe these observations about the relationship between classical enargeia and philosophic theories of the psychic faculties to Ruth Webb, *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2009), chap. 4.

image, a shape, so that things we can scarcely take hold of by thinking may be grasped, so to speak, by looking at them.) (*De Orat.* II.357-8, ch. 87)[9]

Cicero describes a situation in which the image is not identified with the idea but rather "earmarks" it—Cicero's word is *notaret,* which can mean both "to observe" and "to write" (like the English "mark"). This word suggests not a relationship of metaphor, in which a visual impression represents an idea, but of metonymy, in which that impresssion merely indicates or marks that idea. In such a relationship, both entities co-exist in association with each other without any claims of similarity. If applied to allegory, this idea would challenge the notion of allegory as a system of interrelated visual metaphors, with each image's sensory "liveliness" diminished as its conceptual relations to other images multiply. Cicero does not even seem to think memory-images and the entities they mark are ontologically all that dissimilar. The words and ideas marked by images are not immaterial but "things perceived by our hearing or during our thought processes" and "invisible objects that are inaccessible to the judgment of sight," as if they lie *outside* the visual field rather than in a fundamentally non-sensory category. Indeed, his point might simply be that all abstract things are mediated by one sense or another, and the memory arts exploit the fact that the visual sense makes a more lasting impression than the others. The "figure" or "image" or "shape" (*et imago et figura*) helps us more securely "grasp" an object that differs only in its sensory ephemerality.[10]

Cicero's method is consistent with Aristotle's account of recollection[11] which occurs when one memory, connected to others by metonymic chains of association, triggers an adjacent memory. This too is an explicitly material process.[12] As for the order of these memories, he distinguishes between "necessary" and "customary" order—which is to say, some memories form associations by virtue of the order in which they were created, whereas others can be established deliberately. Cicero's memory-training technique merely systematizes the material means by which natural memory works already. If we recall something by following a chain of associated things back to it, we can engineer that chain in advance.

Critics have sometimes presumed that the images orators used in these chains were stereotyped icons. but the rhetoricians in fact recommend that the individual use remembered objects, people and places from their own experience. The idiosyncrasy and sensory specificity of the memory-image is vital to the process, and thus, as I will argue, to allegory. As critics from all periods describe it, allegory presents us with a literal or sensory sign that refers to a meaning "other" than that sign—spiritual, intellectual, moral, political, psychological—and for many of those critics, the movement from sign to meaning is presumed to be supercessional, a disavowal of the concrete sign. I will show that this movement is not supercessional—not an enforced *amnesia* of the material sign—

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[9] Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Cicero: On the Ideal Orator (De Oratore)*, trans. James M. May and Jakob Wisse (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[10] Cicero's vocabulary of the mind "grasping," his claim that no object can exist without a place, and the general character of his materialism betray his debt to Stoic philosophy, which is far stronger than any direct Aristotelian influence. I do not mean, in this brief section on classical psychology, to suggest that Cicero was an Aristotelian. In any expansion of this project, I would explore how Stoic theories of the soul influenced rhetorical *memoria*. The best summary of these theories can be found in A. A. Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics*, Classical Life and Letters (New York: Scribner, 1974), chap. 4.

[11] Aristotle distinguishes the faculty that stores memories from the one that recollects them.

[12] Aristotle considers memories "movements" held in potential.

but mnemonic, and as such, it relies not on the subordinating of sensation but on a kind of sensory shock—a thing or event that does not yet *signify* and so engraves itself in the memory as a guarantor of the meaning eventually attached to it. According to the memory arts, an image makes a physical impression on the mind and then is associated with an idea—but the image comes first, is "stronger" than the idea, even if the process's destination is the idea. The rhetoricians allude to this shock when they recommend that a memory-image be emotionally charged, puzzling, or grotesque. Its mnemonic usefulness depends on an initial disturbing, arresting or incomprehensible quality that is *without* any associated noetic content, that affects us *as an image.* And for it to continue to call forth its associated idea, it must retain this quality—it can't disappear into whatever belated "meaning" attaches to it. It must "stick" in the mind by virtue of an initial exposure independent of ideas.

On this basis, I argue against the claim that allegory is "coercive" insofar as it doesn't allow the reader freedom of interpretation or an opportunity to co-create the meaning of the text. Teskey and Fletcher both claim that this lack of freedom is mirrored in the fictions of allegories themselves, whose characters lack what we would consider full human agency and are subject instead to a will that seems to emanate from the allegory itself. In fact, this view reflects what some critics of the sixteenth century said about allegory. Tyndale, for instance, attributes incredible power to allegorical images, which is part of why he considers them dangerous.[13] Others, like Erasmus and Bacon, critique visual mnemonics on potentially more relevant principles—for them, memory-images don't exactly *coerce,* but they do *distract,* associating ideas with arbitrary images that contribute nothing to the intellectual content of what is memorized.[14] Thus these images cannot facilitate real thought, only rote recall. Both of these critiques are reflected in the modern charge against allegory and the memory arts: that they can only encode information already ossified into dogma. The reader does not interpret such an allegorical text so much as transliterate it, like the orator mechanically turning his memory-images back into the words of his speech. But memory-images and the allegorical imagery that relies on their principles were not understood to be either automatic or irresistible. Such images had to be laboriously composed in the mind—and, as I will show, allegorical imagery did not expect to *imprint* its forms upon the reader's mind but to provide a meditative script for the reader to compose mental imagery in a similarly laborious way.

As Mary Carruthers argues, the memory arts were meant to aid in a process that was fundamentally creative, not merely conservative. The orator doesn't just use his memory-places for reciting speeches he has already written. During his education, he uses them to build a vast filing system for everything he learns—logic, figures of rhetoric, aphorisms, examples from history—which he can then use to compose*,* not just to recite. Building this edifice of mnemonic imagery is a life-long labor, since it is created idiosyncratically from the orator's own experience. The orator uses the memory arts to organize his memory into a library of his own design. So *memoria* in fact makes the more exalted rhetorical canons of *inventio* and *dispositio* possible by laying and marking the recollective paths along which composition travels.

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[13] William Tyndale, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, ed. David Daniell, Penguin Classics (London: Penguin, 2000), 158–59. I will discuss Tyndale's writing on this topic more fully in Chapter Three.
[14] Tyndale, 158–59.

This notion of memory-training, even more important in the Middle Ages, reflects a literate culture that does not see scholarly memory as mechanical storage for the livelier output of the intellect or perception. Medieval theories of the psyche consider the memory the foundation for all cognitive and intellectual activity, and thus the seat of knowledge, ethics, and identity.[15] This has entirely to do with how medieval scholars understand what it means to read. Our culture, as Carruthers argues, privileges the initial encounter with the text, treating reading as a form of empirical investigation: we decode the words and our intellect processes them. For medieval readers, a text cannot truly be "read" until it has first been incorporated or "digested" by the memory. As Carruthers writes, "[m]erely running one's eyes over the written pages is not reading at all"—the reader can't think about a text until it has been turned into "images written in one's brain by emotion and sense."[16] In other words, an unmemorized text *cannot be interpreted*. When one recalls a memorized text, one is not simply re-thinking old thoughts, one *encounters* the text again, under a new aspect. In our empirically minded age, Carruthers argues, "experience" means direct experience: observing, subjecting observations to the operations of intellect, and storing the product in the memory (be that the brain or a written record). For medieval scholars, "experience" means reading.[17] It means learning the texts that constitute their society's collective memory and incorporating those texts into themselves—a bodily process comparable to digestion, not mental abstraction. As they continue to meditate on the memorized text and deepen their understanding of it, they "familiarize" it, making it part of their individual character and habits. This process of digesting or familiarizing a text is not coercive but voluntary and laborious. For these scholars, "it was memory that made knowledge into useful experience, and memory that combined these pieces of information-become-experience into what we would call 'ideas.'"[18]

Allegory makes more sense if we understand it to be participating in this lifelong process. We can see how allegory uses principles of the memory arts to help readers train their memories in Prudentius' fourth-century *Psychomachia,* which scholars widely consider the first fully allegorical narrative poem.[19] The *Psychomachia* depicts a spiritual battle within the body to free the soul from the sins of the flesh, and the narrative is simple by modern standards: seven warrior women representing Christian virtues or "powers" (*virtutes*) of the soul duel seven monsters (*portenta*) representing corporeal vices. One by one, a virtue fights her corresponding vice in single combat, and each vice is defeated until at last the vicious army is routed and the virtues build a temple that represents the purified human body. The three elements of rhetorical *memoria* are present: a linear sequence (*ordo*) of hand-to-hand combats, with each combat encounter providing a clearly defined narrative "place" (*locus*) for memory-images (*imagines*). These images—complex tableaux composed of symbolic physical descriptions and narrative actions—gather in a web of Scriptural references under the topic heading of a

[15] Mary J. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 9.
[16] Carruthers, 11.
[17] Carruthers, 211.
[18] Carruthers, 2.
[19] By this, they mean a poem whose narrative action is allegorical from beginning to end and conducted entirely by allegorical personifications.

single virtue, making it possible for a reader to expand the mnemonic associative network that constitute their memory as a whole.

In Fletcher's terms, the *Psychomachia's* narrative is as symmetrical and schematic as a narrative could get—just a static series of encounters, each predictably ending with the virtue's victory over a vice and culminating in the liberation of the soul from bondage. We *could* make the case that Prudentius organizes his poem this way in order to assimilate Scriptural imagery into a rigid schema and thus, by making that schema so vividly present in the figures of the personified virtues, to argue implicitly that the tenets of Christian virtue are baked into the fabric of the cosmos. But Prudentius never says his poem depicts a metaphysical order underpinning Christian virtue. Instead, he writes of a "method":

> uincendi praesens ratio est, si comminus ipsas
> uirtutum facies et conluctantia contra
> uiribus infestis liceat portenta notare.
> (the method of winning is before (our) senses, if (we) be permitted to mark at close quarters the very faces of the virtues and the monsters struggling against them with dangerous force)[20]
> (18-20)

The poem promises we'll see "the very faces of the virtues,"[21] but the verb he uses for "seeing" is *notare,* which we will remember from Cicero is a key term in rhetorical *memoria,* and he does not actually claim that the virtues themselves will be "present." His goal, rather, is to make a *ratio* present*,* a *method* for conquering the vices. The poem won't try to induce a spurious direct vision of the virtues but to enable mental vision, to help readers craft the word-images with which the mind thinks. *Seeing* these virtues and vices in our mind's eye will provide us with a *practice* for resisting vice in everyday life. Prudentius makes no metaphysical claims; he doesn't seek to represent or reveal but to accommodate, to enable mental (and spiritual) labor.

Later, Prudentius theorizes more about how his allegorical imagery will help the reader develop such a practice:

> haec ad figuram praenotata est linea,
> quam nostra recto uita resculpat pede . . .
> (this line was pre-drawn (or pre-written) into (or in order to be) a figure
> so that our life might reshape (it) with right steps . . .)
> (*Praefatio* 50-51)

Again, we could argue that according to Prudentius, a governing schema or image (*figura*) will generate the poem: the figure was written/drawn first so that later, the poem (and we) can recreate it. If we identify the line or linear path (*linea)* with the narrative of the Old Testament (this passage immediately follows a summary of Gen. 13), Prudentius seems to be saying that this narrative, although in some sense it precedes the figure, only exists to serve that figure and only acquires true sense in retrospect, when its seriality can be reconceived as an image. We could argue that Prudentius imagines a deterministic blueprint that, if we were already familiar with it, *would* render the allegory predictable

[20] *Prudentius*, ed. H. J. Thomson, 2 vols., Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949). My translation, here and following. All passages will be cited by line number in the text; lines in the Praefatio are numbered separately and will be noted as such.

[21] *Facies* can also mean "appearance," the surface an entity offers to human perception.

(and thus, perhaps, unnecessary). But Prudentius does not locate the figure in the poem itself but in the "right steps" (*recto . . . pede*) traced (*resculpat)* by the reader. The poem itself never embodies the figure; rather, it leads its reader through a process of spiritual development to shape their habitual practice of the Christian faith. The figure itself, and any static system it might represent, cannot be abstracted from its enactment. Only the line exists—the line traced by the Scriptural narrative and then by our steps.

This becomes clear if we follow some key images through the poem. Prudentius's allegorical imagery, it turns out, is not symmetrical or static at all, by which I mean the individual battles do not present stereotyped imagery representing discrete concepts in predictable ways. Nor are these battle scenes mnemonic "devices" for memorizing moral precepts, exegetical positions, etc. The poem mutates its imagery in unforeseeable ways, suggesting that it is less interested in giving the reader a set of visual symbols to associate with concepts than in increasing the complexity of associations via a flexible network of images. The poem begins by establishing a matrix from which its imagery will emerge, first presenting Abraham as an image of Faith—the "senex fidelis"—before telling the story in Gen. 13 of Abraham's rescue of Lot from slavery. At the Genesis story's end, Prudentius arranges this imagery by way of a few key words into an allegorical *summatim*:

> uigilandum in armis pectorum fidelium,
> omnemque nostri portionem corporis,
> quae capta foedae seruiat libidini,
> domi coactis liberandam uiribus.
> (we must be vigilant in the arms of faithful hearts and free every part of our body that is held captive by foul lust by gathering our forces at home)
> (*Praefatio* 52-55)

This is the embryonic imagery of combat and captivity from which the allegory of the virtues will grow. The passage doesn't just provide a moralizing gloss for the Biblical story, it takes a few ideas—vigilance, faith, freedom/captivity, lust, strength—and interlaces them with concrete images—arms and armor, hearts, bonds, armies, home. The subsequent battle between virtues and vices amplifies these lines into an allegorical narrative, turning nearly every word of it into a recurring image—over and over, we will encounter arms and armor, hearts, binding and freeing, armies, and (at the very end) home. But just as the "concreteness" of these words flickers, no one-to-one correspondence between image and idea is ever sustained. As these key words travel through the narrative, they accrue not symbolic stability but more and more complex associations with other images and ideas. For instance, *arma* in the passage reappears as the armor of the warlike virtues, but when Faith steps onto the field, she is *without* armor:

> namque repentinus laudis calor ad nova fervens
> proelia nec nec telis meminit nec tegmine cingi,
> pectore sed fidens valido membrisque retectis
> provocat insani . . . pericula belli.
> (for sudden fever for glory, burning for new battles, remembers to gird itself neither with weapons nor with armor, but, trusting in a stout heart and uncovered limbs provokes the dangers of mad war . . .)
> (24-27)

Several key words reappear—*pectus, fidens, tela et tegmen* (arms)—but their narrative syntax has changed: "vigilance" (*vigilans)* has become Faith's forgetfulness (*nec . . . meminit*) because her thirst for glory "trusts in a stout heart" (*pectore . . . fidens valido*), itself a reconfiguration of "faithful hearts" (*pectorum fidelium*). Whatever emblem-like quality the allegorical gloss of the Lot and Abraham story had, Faith's appearance undoes it, freeing these key images and concepts to recombine with each other and form new, as-yet unanticipated combinations. The reader's job is to follow these chains of associations, collecting whatever other images, ideas, and textual references cling to each link, and expanding the network of references that constitutes their own memory.

The *Psychomachia* is not an image of the universe but a script for the performance of a spiritual exercise, and it is no accident that Prudentius wrote it during the rise of Christian monasticism. In *The Craft of Thought,* Mary Carruthers describes how monks used mnemonic methods in meditation and spiritual exercise much the way classical orators used them—not to compose speeches, but to compose prayers. Carruthers argues that monastic prayer was a craft—"the craft of making thoughts about God"—and that a monk treated his memory as a "machine" for praying. Scriptural texts were memorized, meditated on and "digested" into the monk's existing edifice of memorial associations so that later this edifice could furnish the materials for *inuentio,* the composition of new thoughts, new prayers.[22] And indeed, the trained memory *was* thought of as an edifice, a structure the monk spent a lifetime building from the materials of his own mind and body, much like the temple the virtues erect at the end of the *Psychomachia*—a home suitable for God to dwell in.

The monastic memory arts, however, had a new problem to contend with: no matter how much of an asset the memory was, it was also a liability, since it bore traces of the monk's former life in the world. In both positive and negative ways, this put the monk's memory at the center of his discipline, and monastic memory-training involved not just remembering but a kind of forgetting as well. Memories of the monk's personal history had to be re-structured, re-oriented to remind the monk not of worldly sin but of Scripture. Images played a large role in this training. After learning it by heart, the monk made the Bible into a "book of images" woven together by mnemonic association, so that those images, even when found in wordly memories, would produce Scriptural recollection.

The *Psychomachia* offers just such a method for memorial re-structuring. Prudentius's audience had the same problem as the monks—they were Christian converts living in a pagan culture that resisted their efforts to build a daily devotional practice, and so they needed a way to turn even the daily reminders of that pagan culture into memorial cues for the elements of a Christian life. The *Psychomachia* addresses this problem by interlacing Biblical imagery with the language of Rome's national epic, the *Aeneid.* The *Psychomachia*'s verse style is premised on the assumption that its audience of Roman Christian converts would be thoroughly familiar with the *Aeneid,* would in fact have memorized large parts of it and have its language ready to hand, and that they would easily recognize the *Psychomachia*'s spiritual combat as a pastiche of Virgilian battle scenes. By elaborating an episode in Scripture into a metaphor for moral life and *then* into an *Aeneid*-like battle between animated memory-images, the poem exploits the

[22] Mary J. Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 2.

reader's existing mental associations so that Scriptural references cannot be untangled from Virgil's poem.

We can see how Prudentius uses Virgil in the passage I analyzed above: the description of Faith. This passage belongs to the recognizable genre of *ekphraseis* of goddesses, and Faith's sudden appearance on the field of battle might call one in particular to the Roman reader's mind: Venus's appearance to Aeneas in Book 1 of the *Aeneid*.[23] Venus, like Faith, appears in the shape of a maiden and she is dressed, like Faith, in martial clothes, "bearing the arms of a Spartan maid" (*virginis os habitumque gerens, et virginis arma Spartanae*). Venus is even in a similar state of half-clothed dishevellment:

> Namque umeris de more habilem suspenderat arcum
> venatrix, dederatque comam diffundere ventis,
> nuda genu, nodoque sinus collecta fluentis
> (She had hung the customary huntress's bow from her shoulder and given her loose hair to the wind, and the folds of her flowing toga were gathered in a knot to bare her knees)
> (1.318-20)[24]

Compare Faith:

> . . . pugnatura Fides, agresti turbida cultu,
> nuda umeros, intonsa comas, exerta lacertos
> (. . . Faith, ready to fight, in rustic, dishevelled habit, with bare shoulders, undone hair, and uncovered arms)
> (22-23)

Prudentius does not exactly *quote* Virgil.[25] Rather, the descriptions of these two armed women share imagery, sometimes in a general way—Faith's rough, rustic clothing could be seen as de-eroticized and de-mythologized version of Venus's sylvan huntress look—and sometimes through more direct verbal echoes—Venus is "bare of knee" (*nuda genu)* while Faith is "bare of shoulder" (*nuda umeros)* and Venus has "hung a bow from her shoulder" (*umeris . . . suspenderat arcum*). These key words have been scrambled and reconfigured to turn reminders into marks of difference. Both figures are wild, armed women, but Venus is an idealized virgin huntress while Faith dresses like a peasant. Venus also bares a more risqué part of the body than Faith, who has primarily exposed her weapon-bearing limbs, and whereas Faith holds the weapons of a soldier, the bow on

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[23] For a comprehensive analysis of the Psychomachia's Virgilian quotations and allusions, see Macklin Smith, *Prudentius' "Psychomachia": A Reexamination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); for Prudentius's engagement with his Roman pagan context more generally, see Marc Mastrangelo, *The Roman Self in Late Antiquity: Prudentius and the Poetics of the Soul* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008).

[24] Virgil, *The Aeneid of Virgil*, ed. R. D. Williams (London: St. Martin's Press, 1972). My translation. The translation of this passage is problematic, as it is unclear whether Venus's toga is gathered up to bare her knees or flows down to cover them. I submit that Virgil might be teasing us by putting Venus's bare knees in our minds and then failing to specify whether or not we can see them.

[25] The *Psychomachia* is sometimes characterized as a *cento,* a genre of Latin Christian poetry in which Virgil's verses are cut up and reassembled to tell Christian stories. The most well-known of these is probably the *Cento Vergilianus de laudibus Christi* by Faltonia Betitia Proba. But unlike Prudentius, Faltonia assembles her poem entirely out of *verbatim* quotations. She and Prudentius may have shared a goal of turning minds shaped by Roman education toward Christ, but Prudentius takes a very different approach.

Venus's shoulder is less an actual weapon than a mythological reference to that perpetually virginal object of desire, Diana. Indeed, Prudentius might conjure this picture of Venus's bare limbs not to remove its erotic overtones but to use them, since right after he describes Faith's bare arms, he gives them an allegorical gloss: those with faith don't need protection or preparation. Have Venus's erotic appeal and mythological associations been overwritten, or have their indelible impression on the minds of Roman adolescents simply been directed toward different ends?[26]

Prudentius's use of beauty for mnemonic purposes might help explain another feature of the poem that has baffled critics for decades: its extreme violence. Each battle ends not just with a vice's defeat but with their gory mutilation and dismemberment, and critics have struggled to find allegorical significance in the crushed throats, gouged eyeballs, spurting blood, and severed limbs that Prudentius packs into his death scenes. The style and imagery is clearly drawn from Virgil, but compared to the way Prudentius carefully glosses the virtues' and vices' physical appearances elsewhere, these passages seem remarkably free of symbolic meaning apart from that of their general effect. The vices, of course, belong to the flesh while the virtues triumph *over* the flesh, and Prudentius represents this allegorically by distinguishing between the nature of their bodies: the virtues have "sacred bodies" that can't be wounded, while the vices' bodies disintegrate entirely. But this still doesn't explain why Prudentius describes that disintegration in such detail. If, as some critics argue, allegory is inimical to naturalistic detail, the first true instance of the genre grossly violates this principle. Jon Whitman considers this lack of sustained correspondence in the poem a basic flaw, a sign of the clumsiness inevitable in a new genre that hasn't reached its full technical potential.[27] Other critics have read the violence in Teskeyan terms as a site of matter's resistance to allegory.

Carruthers argues that Prudentius uses violence as a mnemonic tool. The death scenes, she points out, follow Cicero's rules for rhetorical *memoria*: memory-images should be emotionally compelling, either because they are very beautiful, very grotesque, or just very strange. As I have been arguing, an allegorical memory-image doesn't *have* to be decodable down to the last detail, and in fact it benefits from the vividness detail confers. But Carruthers' argument doesn't explain everything. The shock of a vivid image, I have argued, should precede its attachment to an idea for it to truly act as a memory-image, but the vices' deaths come *after* long passages of description enumerating allegorical details. No noetic content is attached to the manner of the vices' deaths, so what can they be memory-images *for?* These scenes read more as if Prudentius is taking his carefully constructed memory-images and destroying them, not creating new ones.

I would submit that the primary mnemonic purpose of the vices' violent deaths is to prepare us for a moment that seems to break the rules the poem has established for its

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[26] Macklin Smith points out similarities between the description of Venus and that of Indulgence (Luxuria) in *Prudentius' "Psychomachia,"* 290–91. This would make Venus an invisible node connecting one of the virtues to one of the vices. Elsewhere in the poem, the virtues and their opposing vices trade imagery as well, which militates against the position that the virtues are static emblems. For the ways in which the virtues and vices share imagery, see Martha A. Malamud, *A Poetics of Transformation: Prudentius and Classical Mythology*, Cornell Studies in Classical Philology (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 67–68.

[27] Jon Whitman, *Allegory: The Dynamics of an Ancient and Medieval Technique* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 87–91.

allegory: that vices can be physically hurt and virtues cannot. After the virtues rout the army of the vices and Peace and Concord lead the victorious army back to their camp, a vice slips into the camp in disguise and deals Concord a wound with a concealed dagger. The sight of Concord's blood has an electrifying effect on the other virtues. They are "terrified" (*trepida*) as they "turn their sad eyes" to stare: "the telltale blood of the wound was dripping from her armored coat" (stillabat uulneris index / ferrata de ueste cruor). Concord's wound shocks the virtues not just because the virtues are unwoundable but because no enemy appears present who could have inflicted it. Quickly, though, they notice the vice nearby, betrayed by her symptoms of fear: "for the pallid face shows of the outrage and gives proof of guilt, and the limp hand and white face tremble at discovery" (nam pallor in ore / conscius audacis facti dat signa reatus / et deprensa tremunt languens manus et color / albens, 702-4). Once they discover her true name, the cause of the wound is revealed and the episode explicated: she is Discord, also called Heresy, and we understand this to be an allegory of conflicting opinion within the communion of the Church. The virtues tear Discord to pieces (as discord itself dismembers the Christian communion) and the danger to Concord is averted.

This moment demonstrates all of the mnemonic qualities I have been attributing to allegorical imagery. The indexical blood and the symptoms of fear in Discord are each the key that decodes the meaning of the other, as the eyes of the Virtues move between different parts of the scene—but nevertheless, the wound arrests everybody's attention because it doesn't at first make sense. For a moment, everybody just stares. In other words, Prudentius inserts a temporal gap between the image and its significance, allowing the wound to exist for a moment as an inexplicable sight. Once that moment passes, the wound is attached to a meaning, and this too is made possible by properties of the virtues' bodies. Prudentius goes out of his way to tell us that "only the skin" of Concord was injured—"but the vital parts of her sacred body were not permitted to be broken; with a touch only to the outermost part, the cut skin indicated a slender stream of blood" (sed non uitalia rumpere sacri / corporis est licitum, summo tenus extima tactu / laesa cutis tenuem signauit sanguine riuum).[28] In other words, the touch of Discord's dagger is writerly, with the "slender" (*tenuem*) river of blood acting as a mark or sign (*signavit*) on the skin. In the prologue, Prudentius offered us the "faces" of the virtues as much to be read as to be seen ("marked," *notare*), and here he makes the point more strongly: Concord's body is not so much a body as a writing surface.[29] But the writing remains unintelligible until the second half of the sign is discovered: the lurking Vice Discord and her signs of fear. The memory arts rely on exactly this process: the infliction of a mark that is also a wound—which is to say, a shock, a physical imposition on the senses and

[28] Camilla's death in the *Aeneid* provides a relevant intertext here. She dies by impalement, a bloody death similar to those of the vices, but Diana promises to convey her "sacred body" to her tomb, likening this to a restoration of virginity (11.557-96; 11.794-835). Concord has affinities with her insofar as her sacred body doesn't *quite* protect her from harm, but Prudentius does make a point to say that the body of a virtue can't be penetrated.

[29] The vices' bodies, however, cannot be written upon because they represent nothing but the flesh, and in the end, they are reduced to an undifferentiated mass of flesh—as if the allegorical details adorning their bodies have been wiped away like chalk from a slate. See James J. Paxson, *The Poetics of Personification*, Literature, Culture, Theory 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) for an analysis of the vices' deaths as an act of iconoclasm.

body that doesn't at first appear to *mean* anything. It can't be anticipated—and this is precisely what makes it memorable.

The disintegration of the vices' bodies points to a deep relationship between memory and material decay. Memory, as part of the body, is subject to decay but also a bulwark against it, and the memory arts attempt to turn that vulnerability into writing, to salvage intelligibilty from ruin. The founding myth of classical mnemotechnics, related in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and Cicero's *De Oratore,* demonstrates the relationship between *imago, locus* and *ordo* while also identifying the origin of memory-images with physical destruction. The story goes thus: Simonides of Ceos, a renowned poet, is invited by a Thessalian nobleman to deliver an ode in honor of him at a banquet. But when the ode offends the nobleman, he refuses to pay Simonides half his fee. Shortly thereafter, Simonides is called outside, and at that moment, the banquet-hall collapses and kills everyone inside. The founding of rhetorical mnemotechnics occurs here: the banqueters are mangled beyond recognition, but because Simonides had noted the order in which they were reclining around the table, he could identify their bodies for their relatives. The mnemonic places correspond to the seats around the banquet table that Simonides pictures to himself when trying to recall the names of the dead; the memory-images correspond to the faces; and the memorized text to the names. But the faces are destroyed, so they exist only as images in the memory, recovered from destruction *by* memory. The story itself acts as a mnemonic place for gathering the key features of the method: order and places, vision, memory—and death, the factor that explains why we *need* memory. The method understands recollection as the production of a word (name) in connection with an image (face), and uses ordered sequence to preserve the integrity of the images, which—like human faces—are subject to decay.

This story also helps explain many of the specific recommendations by Cicero and others for the qualities a good memory-image should have. The word Cicero uses to describe the plight of the banqueters' relatives is *internoscere*—they couldn't "distinguish between" the crushed men and so could not bury them individually. Ordered sequence allows for images to bear differentiated meanings—because images, unlike words, don't acquire meaning in distinction from other images. There might also be a macabre pun in *internoscere*. Explicitly, Simonides' problem is discerning the identities of bodies that are effaced but still discrete from one another. But Cicero could also be saying that one body can't be told apart from another because their parts are all crushed together in the general ruin. That is not necessarily a problem Simonides' method of ordered sequence could solve. By recollecting which face-name was next to which other, he can produce the names without seeing the faces, but he wouldn't have been able to figure out which human remains belonged in which place. If the pun does exist, then it appears as the possibility of a worse confusion that resolves uneasily into a lesser one—one in which a face can be effaced but still be discernable as an individual face, a unit of meaning or personal identity. That the problem in visual mnemonics might not just be establishing the meaning to be borne by an image but also establishing the boundaries of the image itself animates a lot of the "visual hygiene" of the memory arts. Cicero, for instance, recommends spacing the places an appropriate distance apart, keeping them not too cluttered with images, and making the images not too light or dark. As I will show, poets both use and subvert these recommendations in their imagery.

What allegory values about mental images is that, with the help of order and place, they can be more reliably preserved than *real* objects. Western Christianity was very concerned with the crumbling and intermingling of organic matter when it came to sacred objects—saints' relics and the Eucharistic wafer come to mind. How to be sure you've collected every crumb of the Host, and what happens if you don't? A reliquary's purpose is to give the relic the hard mineral boundary it lacks, to collect, contain and preserve an object that doesn't want to remain a discrete object. In miracle stories, God's grace often intervenes to prevent decomposition—indeed, only grace can prevent it, but the reliquary (not itself exempt from decomposition) is the human technology that aids grace, doing the work not just of physical containment but of rhetorical framing, of drawing a literal box around the sacred crumbs and dust and presenting them as a readable thing. Likewise, Simonides invents his method in response to the conditions of natural memory, which always begins with a violent interruption: death, wounding, bodily disintegration. He finds a way to reconstitute this disintegration by making it legible, to make a violent mark inscriptive—not unlike the mark left by Aristotle's signet ring.

The mnemonic concept for this rhetorical framing is that of a "gathering place"—what Cicero calls *locus* and Aristotle calls *topos,* the topic headings under which information is gathered. Monastic compositional prayer also relies on the concept of *ductus,* or the "way" through a composition. The meditating monk makes a path through his prayer as he composes it—and so too can an author lead a reader through a written text. If *ordo* is the logical sequence of places (in the memory or in a written text), then *ductus* is the quality of movement through that sequence—the variety of pace and tone, of what one might call emotional texture, that moves the reader from one place to the next. The places in such a text are marked out and divided by rhetorical tropes, so that if we think of these places as complex pictures, the trope "frames" the episode and marks it off as a place.[30] These way-points move the reader through a composition just as a monk would navigate a meditative script for prayer in his mind's eye.

The poems I have chosen to focus on in this dissertation belong to a sub-genre of allegorical poetry particularly interested in adapting the concepts of *locus* and *ductus* to narrative: the pilgrimage allegory and its close cousin, the chivalric quest allegory.[31] These poems build on tropes developed by the *Psychomachia,* but they differ in an important way: they have a protagonist whose itinerary provides an *ordo* for the places of the poem. These poems, which are often dream-visions, feature a pilgrim (or knight) on his journey of life, along which he has psychomachic encounters with personified virtues and vices.[32] The pace and adventures of the pilgrim, indeed the pilgrim's very emotions

[30] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, 204.

[31] The two are intimately related. Almost as soon as it was invented, the pilgrimage allegory began acquiring chivalric elements. See Marco Nievergelt, *Allegorical Quests from Deguileville to Spenser* (Cambridge, UK: D. S. Brewer, 2012), chap. 2.

[32] Another literary influence on the medieval pilgrimage allegory were allegorical interpretations of the *Aeneid* that treat Aeneas as the soul suffering the travails of bodily existence as it travels to reunite with the Heavenly Father. Indeed, both the *Psychomachia* and these medieval allegoreses of the *Aeneid* represent Christian confrontations with classical epic. For discussions of medieval allegorical commentaries on classical epic, see Mindele Anne Treip, *Allegorical Poetics and the Epic: The Renaissance Tradition to "Paradise Lost,"* Studies in the English Renaissance (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1994); Christopher Baswell, *Virgil in Medieval England: Figuring the "Aeneid" from the Twelfth Century to*

and character, provide a compelling *ductus* for the reader, as do the poems' narrative and rhetorical variety—for instance, the pilgrim may stop to listen to or participate in a debate, or to view a sight that gives the poet an occasion for an *ekphrasis*. The pilgrim's battles with enemies and rescue by helpers constitute discrete episodes, the order of which can be recalled by remembering which stage of his journey they occurred at. (For instance, the pilgrim often begins the poem by crossing paths with the bodily vices—the so-called vices of youth—but meets Penance as he approaches the end.) Most importantly, many pilgrimage allegories focus thematically on memory itself, since learning, reminiscence, and the struggle to keep one's final reward in sight are so central to the narrative of Christian life. Even as these poems avail themselves of the memory arts' techniques, they explore the limits and paradoxes of memory and the means by which human beings shore up their memories against its frailty—and, for some poets, its inevitable failure.

Chapter One analyzes Guillaume de Deguileville's fourteenth-century *Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine,* the founding text of the medieval pilgrimage allegory tradition and the poem in which the mnemonic poetics of the *Psychomachia* flower into their fullest form. During the thousand or so years between the *Psychomachia* and *Le Pèlerinage*, memory-training itself obviously changed a great deal, but it retained its intimate connection with allegory. Deguileville, who was a Cistercian monk, writes his poem to secularize monastic memory-training and offer its benefits to lay readers, readers whose memories are not in a position to reject life in the world, and so his poem treats the sensory memory less as an intermediate condition to be overcome and more as an active tool for leading a Christian life.

The tradition initiated by Deguileville continues into the late Middle Ages, but by then it has taken on new forms. Chapter Two discusses *Le Chevalier Délibéré* by the Burgundian poet Olivier de La Marche and argues that it marks a crisis in mnemonic allegory. La Marche still borrows the formal resources of the memory arts for his poem, but he is more interested in using the tropes of *imago, locus,* and *ordo* as metaphors for representing how memory works. In this way, he looks forward to Edmund Spenser—but more on that below. While La Marche was writing his poem in the late fifteenth century, systems of information storage and retrieval were undergoing a revolution. The profileration of printed books and their expanding readership (driven, in England, at least in part by the soteriological importance Protestants placed on Bible-reading) were making medieval methods of memory-training obsolete. As new scholarly technologies took over the function of the memory arts, the models for conceptualizing the memory peculiar to those new technologies edged out the older metaphors of memory as an interior physical space.[33] The commonplace book, for instance, although based on the

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Chaucer, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 24 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); David L. Pike, "Bernard Silvestris' Descent into the Classics: The 'Commentum Super Sex Libros Aeneidos,'" *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 4, no. 3 (1998): 343–63.

[33] Walter Ong famously argued that printing and pedagogical methods like Ramism transformed a culture that, although literate, still thought of language in oral terms into one for which the word was primarily visual. Subsequent critics have taken issue with his claims, but many (perhaps most) retain the basic idea that changes in Europe's media environment (including the spread of printing) caused a fundamental shift in how information was stored, structured, used, and conceptualized. Ann Moss in her book on printed commonplace books sees a shift from the holistic organization of knowledge by networks of meaningful associations to purely arbitrary systems such as alphabetical indexes, and throughout the Middle Ages, she

same classical dialectical and rhetorical topics that informed the memory arts, could less easily be imagined as an architectural space,[34] and humanist pedagogical reformers like Erasmus had begun to emphasize writing and copying as the better way to memorize texts.[35] And just as religious images had come under fire from Protestant iconoclasts, image-based memory arts were subjected to a kind of pedagogical iconoclasm on similar grounds: by tying recollection to mental imagery that might have very little to do with the text, the scholar risked rote memorization without an accompanying understanding. For instance, when recommending that his students repeatedly copy the excerpts in their notebooks, Erasmus emphasizes that understand must proceed and enable memory, not the other way around. He and other humanists rejected the notion, fundamental to the practice of the memory arts in the Middle Ages, that a text had to be memorized *before* it could be understood.

Nevertheless, the memory arts did not vanish from popular consciousness. Even while their use declined, they remained, as Ann Moss puts it, "part of the imaginative space available to men and women...in the period of transition, when some habits of thought took longer to die than others."[36] In particular, people did not abandon the belief that memory is enhanced by strong sensory impressions, particularly visual ones. Erasmus himself acknowledges this even where he insists on the superiority of his own methods—and indeed, his own methods do include visual aids, although they are more verbal than pictorial and, vitally, not meant to encourage *mental* imagery. In general, the idea that memory for texts might be mixed up in an interior space with shifting and unpredictable *phantasmata* worried religious and pedagogical reformers alike—but that idea did not go away, and this was, of course, the most worrying part.

This fear has a formative effect on allegorical poetry in Reformation England. Fifty years after La Marche's poem is published, it is loosely translated (one might rather say adapted) into English by the Protestant minister Stephan Batman as *A Trauayled Pylgrime*, which I discuss in Chapter Three. Batman's translation clearly shows the suspicion with which he regarded the visual mnemonic elements in La Marche's poem. Where he perceives a gap between sign and meaning, a potential danger point for error, he plugs it up with a reminder to the reader to be wary. Batman tries to be speaking the truth at all times—to close all the gaps. His remaking of La Marche's poem is, in essence, anti-mnemonic. He doesn't want his reader to use his poem as material for an ongoing project of memory-training, which would leave far too much liberty to the reader's

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identifies a tension between scholars whose goal is to incorporate and "transmute" what they read into new compositions and scholars more interested in preserving the distinction between old authorities and one's own output. Finally, she identifies a shift in emphasis from memory as an interior physical space to memory purely as writing (*Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996]). Ann Blair rejects the view that any such major change occurred and that the development of medieval indexing systems and excerpting methods like *florilegia* show more continuity than rupture with early modern systems of information organization (*Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010]). For Ong's seminal argument, see *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Methuen, 1982); and *Ramus: Method, and the Decay of Dialogue; from the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958).

[34] Moss, *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought*, 8.

[35] Desiderius Erasmus, *Opera Omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami*, vol. 2 (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing, 1971), 118.

[36] Moss, *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought*, 10.

"fancies." Any shaping his poem does of his reader must therefore occur in the moment of reading.

The Fairie Queene, as I will argue in Chapter Four, does not follow Batman's attempts to reform allegory but rather to adapts it to the new literate culture. I argue that *The Faire Queene* extends the theme of memory from that of the individual to that of an entire cultural tradition by employing the technical tropes of the memory arts in novel ways—not to reject or undermine the allegorical methods of his medieval precursors but to revise their purposes for a context in which memory (and its methods) have been revalued. Whereas the older poems intend for their reader to use their visual descriptions as a meditative script, Spenser uses the formal tropes of the memory arts (image, place and order) to *represent* the process of manipulating mental imagery—and extends this representation from individual cognition to the memory-processes of an entire culture, a memory that is both analogous to individual human memory and alien and unaccommodating.

Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine, Le Chevalier Délibéré, and *A Trauayled Pylgrime* are not all the most prominent pre-Spenserian examples of their genre for literary history, or even the most significant moments of pilgrimage allegory's passage from French poetry into English.[37] What they do demonstrate is a pre-Spenserian trajectory for how poets exploited the formal principles of the memory arts. I will not survey the genre comprehensively—such a task must wait for a future project. Rather, I will use these three pre-Spenserian poems to shed light on Spenser's engagement with memory-training. These three poems draw a historical arc from the mid to late Middle Ages that loosely corresponds with changing theories of memory and information storage technologies, but I should emphasize that a truly comprehensive survey would complicate that narrative. Ultimately this is not a dissertation about a poetic genre or the history of mnemonics but about some neglected literary antecedents of *The Faerie Queene* that reveal continuities between medieval allegory and Spenser's poem. I make no claims about a lineage of direct literary influence. Rather, I hope to draw out formal comparisons between poems that might not otherwise be juxtaposed.

Allegory has long been implicated in literary-historical narratives that frame modernity (implicitly, if not explicitly) as an awakening from the primitive illusions of the Middle Ages. In these accounts, the modern novel gives us grainy particulars, surprising exceptions, and encounters with the strange and new, while medieval allegory can only represent the dogmatic and the already-known. By redefining allegory not as a system of correspondences but as an imaginative itinerary, I offer a different account of

[37] More significant moments in this passage are the early English translations of *Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine* (as well as Deguileville's *Pèlerinage de l'Âme* and *Pèlerinage de Jhesuchrist*). The earliest are in prose, but Lydgate's 1426 verse translation of *Vie* was particularly well known. I have chosen not to address Lydgate because his poem translates the second recension of the poem, in which Deguileville dramatically reduces its mnemonic elements in favor of doctrinal elaborations and scholarly apparatus aimed at a more narrowly clerical audience. (The second recension, probably for this reason, is attested in far fewer manuscripts than the first.) A full historical survey of my topic would address the differences between the two recensions as well as their English translations, which adapt not only the poem's form but its doctrinal content to an English context. These comparisons would inevitably complicate any notions of a linear historical progression from the mnemonic richness of Deguileville's poem to the mnemonic poverty of Batman's (and I hope I do not suggest any such notion here). For an overview of Deguileville's reception in England, see Nievergelt, *Allegorical Quests from Deguileville to Spenser*, 35–38.

its role in the genre-matrix of the late sixteenth century, as a form capable of critical engagement with the new cultures of knowledge production that had supposedly made it obsolete.

Chapter One
Guillaume de Deguileville's Book of Images

Bernard of Clairvaux, the great twelfth-century reformer of the Cistercian order to which Guillaume de Deguileville belonged, considered the memory a cesspool. His novices entered his order not as children but as adults who had spent time at court, in military service, or in secular professions, and their memories of these worldly experiences threatened their conversion to monastic life. But memories of sin cannot simply be erased, and so Bernard developed ways of draining the filth, or, as he puts it, of "blanching" the novice's memory so that even recollections of a sinful past would turn him more fully toward spiritual contemplation.[38] The sensory memory for the monk was a site of struggle: a source of fleshly temptation that could also be made to serve spiritual discipline if properly trained. Bernard trained his monks' memories according to his idiosyncratic notion of the senses: the bodily senses prefigure the "spiritual senses" by which the fully devoted monk would eventually enjoy God, not in abstract apprehension but in spiritual delectation once the monk had learned to take a quasi-sensory pleasure in Scripture.[39] The monk does not transcend his body; Bernard insists that this transformation of bodily into spiritual sense must happen before death, since the senses too are mortal.[40] His sermons encourage this transformation, interweaving the rich sensory imagery of Scripture with imagery from his novices' former lives: that of chivalry, of erotic love, etc., so that eventually, even these memories will provoke Scriptural reminiscence. He "restructures" his novices' memories, leading them from the pleasures of worldly life to a spiritual pleasure beyond and yet somehow in the image of bodily pleasure.[41]

Bernard's model of how bodily sensation leads to spiritual apprehension is thus more complicated than a simple rejection of the body, and his attitude toward memory sits right at the center of that knot. Memory for him is both a sinful record of sensory impressions and the means of approaching spiritual truth. In medieval Aristotelian psychology, certain faculties of the soul are unequivocally immaterial, but others—sensation, imagination, and memory—are not. Of these, memory holds a peculiar status, being both critical to spiritual development and embarrassingly organic, as material as the body but less easily distinguished from the self. Failures of memory can certainly be attributed to its material nature, but it is harder to reconcile the fact that even a spiritually healthy memory still obeys material principles: the laws of associative recall described by Aristotle. Memory is a material process that appears to be good for us, under certain circumstances—a good, perhaps, that belongs to us as much as to grace. Between the mortal and immortal parts of the soul, it occupies an ambiguous position.

The question is, how do we go from one part to the other, from remembering sensations to that which is beyond bodily sensation? For a poet, this question has a corollary: how can a secular fiction say something true? Guillaume de Deguileville, a Cistercian monk who lived about two centuries after Bernard, wrote what scholars

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[38] Janet Coleman, *Ancient and Medieval Memories: Studies in the Reconstruction of the Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 185.
[39] Coleman, 180.
[40] Coleman, 182.
[41] Coleman, 184.

consider the first pilgrimage allegory, and he uses this figure of man's journey from birth to death to adapt Bernard's goals to secular literature. Although Deguileville's pilgrim is a monk and his pilgrimage culminates in a full conversion to monastic devotion, *Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine* (1330) is addressed to a lay audience, and Deguileville applies the sort of monastic memory-training developed by Bernard to a poetic and narrative form that facilitates the reader's apprehension of higher things, but without Bernard's insistence on "blanching" their memories of worldly life.[42] The foundation of Deguileville's technique, like Bernard's, is to establish a correspondence between the corporeal and spiritual senses in which the former figures the latter, but Deguileville writes for a reader who will never achieve the monk's goal of spiritual transcendence—for a reader whose bodily senses must guide their virtuous action in a fallen world. Deguileville treats his reader's memory less as an intermediate condition to be overcome and more as a tool sufficient in itself for leading a secular life.[43]

Monastic memory-training was of course far more elaborate than Deguileville's lay readers would need. A monk's goal was to inscribe Scripture on his heart, to transform it from words on a page into a part of himself. To do this, elaborate memory-training protocols were required. Jean LeClercq and Mary Carruthers describe monastic reading as a multiple-step process that only began with what we would consider reading—decoding words on a page—and that included committing the text to memory. This first step, called *lectio,* was only the precondition for higher-order tasks embraced under the term *meditatio*, the cogitating done over a text. Monastic writers describe *meditatio* in terms of digestion, referring to Scriptural recollection as *ruminatio,* literally "chewing," as if the mind were a bovine stomach from which memorized material could be called up and chewed over. As the monk chewed over a recollected text, he deepened his understanding of it, and when he "swallowed" it again, he returned the text to his memory fundamentally changed in its relations to that memory's other contents. Together, these tasks constituted a complex process by which a text was "familiarized," absorbed into the self and made ethically active.[44]

Because his audience's spiritual needs were fundamentally different from that of the monks, Deguileville does not attempt to replicate the exact techniques monastic memory-training for them. Rather, he exploits its basic premise of visualizing images in places in a certain order. Unlike Bernard's monks, Deguileville's readers will never be able to see with a spiritual sense, but as far as Deguileville is concerned, they can understand their bodily senses as a figure for spiritual ones—not just a shadowy copy but a material image of them, a stamp in the organic soul made by spiritual things. To

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[42] The poem exists in two recensions; this chapter will only discuss the first. The second, greatly expanded from the first, was far less popular judging by the number of extant manuscripts, and according to Marco Nievergelt, Deguileville seems to have intended it more as a canonical written reference for a scholarly audience, with greater theological rigor, biblical citations, references to patristic authorities, headings, marginal glosses, rubrics, etc. The framing conceit of oral performance is also removed. For a more detailed summary of differences between the two recensions, see Nievergelt's *Allegorical Quests from Deguileville to Spenser*, 32–40.

[43] Susan Hagen's book, *Allegorical Remembrance: A Study of "the Pilgrimage of the Life of Man" as a Medieval Treatise on Seeing and Remembering* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990), the only full-length study of the poem in English, remarks extensively on its use of mnemonic theory and practice. I diverge from her, though, in seeing the poem's imagery not as way to inculcate moral lessons but as material for a meditative script.

[44] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 202–12.

indicate this relationship between the spiritual and bodily senses, Deguileville creates a productive confusion between the pilgrim's direct sight and the reader's mental representations. The pilgrim is inspired to take his journey by a holy vision:

> Avis m'ert si com dormoie
> Que je pelerins estoie
> Qui d'aler estoie excite
> En Jherusalem la cite.
> En un mirour, ce me sembloit,
> Qui sanz mesure grans estoit
> Celle cite aparceue
> Avoie de loing et veue.
> (As I was sleeping, I dreamed (lit. *it seemed to me as if I was dreaming?*) I was a pilgrim eager (lit. *excited*) to go to the city of Jerusalem. I saw this city from afar in a mirror that seemed to me large beyond measure. (lit. *in a mirror, it seemed to me, that was large beyond measure, the city appeared, seen from afar.*)
> (35-42)

The oddest thing about the city is that it's a vision within a vision. As Susan Hagen points out, the dreaming narrator is already *having* a vision, so there is no necessity to mark the city as a vision by placing it in the frame of a mirror.[45] So why is the mirror there? Hagen argues that the mirror hovers between two narrative frames, that of the monk who dreams and that of the pilgrim he becomes *in* the dream.[46] For us, both the sleeping monk and the pilgrimage he dreams of are imaginary—what Aristotle calls *phantasia*, sensory impressions the mind manipulates to think and compose fictions—but, Hagen argues, the liminal position of the city in the mirror gives it an ontological status independent of either narrative frame. Enclosed within the mirror, Jerusalem seems to float free of either the waking or dreaming world. Hagen claims that mirrors in medieval literature most often figure direct sight—not of an image but of the object itself—so the fact that Deguileville's mirror belongs neither to a world of *phantasia* nor to one of ordinary perception indicates for Hagen that the monk's vision of the New Jerusalem comes from somewhere else—not from the mind but from God.[47] In Bernard's terms, we might say the monk sees with a "spiritual sense." And yet the mirror *is* also linked to mental representation. The passage is full of the language of semblance: it *seemed* to the narrator *as if* he were a pilgrim; the city *seems* to appear in a mirror; and the city is seen "from afar" ("de loing"), so while it may be vivid, it is not exactly present. The mirror mediates the city's presence, if not for the pilgrim then certainly for us. For the pilgrim, the vision may transcend *phantasia*, but the city appears to us as an image in a container. The very figure that indicates direct vision for the pilgrim signifies mental representation for us.

DeGuileville uses those mental representations much the way Prudentius claims to do in the *Psychomachia*. Prudentius too uses the language of direct sight to figure what for *us* will be images in the mind's eye when he says we will observe "the very faces" of the virtues—not as direct revelation, but as therapeutic imagery that will form the basis of a "method." DeGuileville's method is slightly different. He borrows Prudentius'

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[45] Hagen 9

[46] Hagen points out that in some illustrations of the poem, the mirror seems to be in the sleeping chamber; in others, it is located in the dream-world.

[47] Hagen 26

personified virtues and vices, but his poem has one thing the *Psychomachia* does not: a main character, who is also a first-person narrator.[48] This narrator acts as our proxy in a visionary world of the spiritual senses so that we can create an analogue in our bodily ones. Over and over, the pilgrim sees with a "spiritual sight" that grants direct apprehension of truth—but we, of course, cannot see what the pilgrim sees. These reported sights become mental images readers can use to train their memories much the way Bernard's monks do. Deguileville depends on an effect similar to classical *enargeia,* which Cicero and Quintillian define as a rhetorical figure that brings a scene vividly before the listener's mental eye—often in more detail than the orator explicitly includes, as spoken words call up images that themselves call upon others. DeGuileville too intended his poem to be received aurally, and he would have assumed, like his contemporaries, that a sermon or a poem read aloud would recall stored visual impressions corresponding to words received by the ear.[49] Once these images were drawn forth, the memory's associative network could be altered. The audience of Deguileville's poem could thus experience the poem as a meditative script for infusing the experiences of ordinary life with religious associations.

Later in the poem, DeGuileville resolves the ambiguity in what kind of mental phenomenon the mirror represents, as well as clarifying the role of mental imagery in his reader's memory-training. In a debate the pilgrim witnesses between Wisdom and Aristotle, Aristotle argues that it's against nature for the Real Presence, whose nourishment "fills all people and cannot be contained within the earth or the heavens," to be "in a mysterious way enclosed" in something so small as a piece of bread, to which Wisdom responds with an analogy. He has seen the cities of Rome and Athens, has he not? Yes, he has. Wisdom argues that bread can contain the Real Presence just as something large can be enclosed in the memory—which she compares to a mirror:

"Or me di, dist elle,ou as mis
Toutes ces grandeurs que me dis?
"En ma memoire mis les ai,"
Dist il.—"Certes mont bien le sai,"
A Sapience respondu,
"Et pour ce me conclurras tu,
Se memoire est en ta teste,
Qu'en mendre lieu que n'est ta teste
As encloses deux cites grans
Avec touz ses estudians.
En la prunelle de mon eul
Ce ci aussi monstrer te veul:
Regarde la com est petite,
Et toutevoies ens habite
Toute ta face entierement
Si com pues voier apertement.

[48] First-person narrators are a generic feature of dream-vision poems, evident in Deguileville's major source, Le Roman de la Rose. See J. Stephen Russell, *The English Dream Vision: Anatomy of a Form* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1988), 6.

[49] For the aural emphasis in medieval reading, see Ruth Crosby, "Oral Delivery in the Middle Ages," *Speculum* 11, no. 1 (1936): 88–110.

Aussi regarde en un mirour,
Ta face y verras. . . "
("Now tell me," [Wisdom] said, "where have you put all these large things (Rome and Athens) you are telling me about?"
"I have put them in my memory," [Aristotle] said.
"Yes, I know that very well," Wisdom responded, "and therefore you convince me that, if your memory is in your head, then you have enclosed two great cities with all their students in a place smaller than your head. I want to show you this with the pupil of my eye as well. Look how small it is. But your whole face is entirely contained in it, as you can entirely see. Look in a mirror, too, and you and you will see in it the image of your face.")
(3185-3202)

The bread, the mirror, the memory—all of them are finite, material containers of vast, even infinite things. The mirror here represents not vision, not revelation, but *phantasia*, mental imagery, and that imagery has peculiar capabilities that excede its material limits. Descriptive language can excite an inner vision that doesn't obey the rules of external vision, and Deguileville exploits that flexibility. For one thing, as Wisdom's example of the remembered cities suggests, a mental image of a place does not have to be spatially coherent, and so a verbal description can create imagery that would be impossible in the external world.[50] For another, descriptive language can "superimpose" images to associate one with another. Wordplay can also create such associations—for instance, a pun or homonym can condense two images under one word. The extraordinary plasticity of mental imagery makes a variety of mnemonic techniques possible, and DeGuileville builds his allegory on them.

Some passages in *Le Pèlerinage* only make sense if understood to be enacting a mnemonic process. For instance, the pilgrim is given a staff signifying hope by his benefactor Grace Dieu, on top of which is a pommel containing a round mirror—a smaller, more portable version of the mirror that showed him the vision of the heavenly city. As before, it's unclear what the image in the mirror represents. Its purpose is to renew the pilgrim's motivation by keeping the city constantly before his eyes—but what exactly is he seeing? Does the mirror represent his memory of the vision, or is it a new vision in its own right? This mirror doesn't seem to be a copy of the larger mirror because it contains objects the larger one didn't (specifically, "all the distant lands" between him and his destination). But it doesn't seem to be revelatory either—it's more like Wisdom's mirror, and since the pilgrim can take it with him, it seems more likely to represent the extraordinary capacities of mental representation than the genuine miracle of heavenly vision. The problem deepens when Grace Dieu explains the pommel's allegorical significance:

"Le haut pommel est Jhesucrist
Qui est, si com la lettre dist,
Un mirour qui est sans tache,
Ou chascun puet veoir sa face,
Ou tout le monde soi mirer
Se puet bien et considerer,

[50] For an account of how Hugh St. Victor makes use of mental imagery's flexibility in *Libellus de formatione arche*, see Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 294–95.

Quar tout li mondes ens mire
N'est pas si grant quë as en de.
En ce pommel te dois mirer
Et souvent regarder. . . "
("The high pommel is Jesus Christ, who is a mirror without flaw, as the scripture says. All can see their faces in it, and all can see their reflections and look at themselves, for their reflection is not as big as an ace on the dice. You should look into this pommel and look at yourself often. . . ")
(3691-3700)

No longer is there any reference to the city in the mirror. The mirror now does what ordinary mirrors do: it reflects the pilgrim's face. And yet, the mirror is also at its most metaphorical here: it is Christ the "mirror without flaw." So what do we make of the mirror's sudden change in function, from showing cities to reflecting faces? And why does Deguileville change that function at the very moment we'd expect Grace Dieu to interpret the one the poem had already established for it? In short, why does Deguileville so radically complicate our mental picture of the pommel after taking such pains to form it? We can only conclude that he does this to make the mirror a memory-place for *us*—a gathering place where holy city, image of Christ, and image of Christ in man are all superimposed and thus linked by association inside a single frame. As Grace Dieu then explains, to see oneself in the mirror of Christ is both to recognize the facts of one's sinful history and to see within that history the potential for forgiveness and salvation. This is why Grace Dieu warns the pilgrim to hold particularly tight to the staff of hope when he looks in the mirror: the memory of sin can induce despair. One needs, therefore, to think of it as an image patterned by scriptural history and thus a fragment (like Wisdom's broken mirror) of the story of universal salvation. But the image of the holy city also dwells in the pilgrim's memory. So by looking in the mirror of memory, one can see both the empirical facts of one's past and the transcendent promise of salvation—both of which can, with hope, lead toward conversion. For our benefit, Deguileville condenses all of these theological ideas inside a unifying place, so that as one image inside it gives way to the next, they are knit together in our memory—giving the reader their own mirrored pommel, as it were. The narrator never mentions the images contained in the mirror again, we are left to supply from *our* memories what, exactly, the pilgrim sees when he looks into it. This is how Deguileville trains us.

Thus for the first two pillars of memory-training—*imago* and *locus.* The poem relies on *ordo* as well. For instance, in the passage above, Deguileville "superimposes" the images in the mirror by naming them in a specific order. Elsewhere, he strings places together like beads on a string—and he uses any number of narrative elements to provide that string, often depending as well on the spatial absurdities mental imagery allows. When the pilgrim first sees the heavenly Jerusalem, he sees from angles and in a depth of detail no material eye ever could. First he tells us he saw the city "from afar," but then we learn it was "richly decorated inside and out," and that "inside, all was gladness and joy without sorrow." Immediately, the distance between him and the city collapses, and even the distinction between the city's outside and inside. After this, the pilgrim focuses on the wall around the city and how people attempt to pass through or climb over it, representing the many paths to salvation. We follow his gaze as he looks from one part of the busy scene to another: "Just as I looked up, I saw a marvelous thing. . . " and "As

soon as I turned and looked in the other direction. . . " Markers of his shifting gaze connect these moving pictures, forming in our mind not so much a continuous scene as a series of animated frames. If the pilgrim sees these impossible sights with a spiritual sense, then we receive the vision as a sequence of memory-places.

The city wall has its own *ordo*—that of the "scenes" the pilgrim sees as his gaze moves—but the poem as a whole also has another *ordo* that links larger units. The poem is thus composed of nested memory-places, and Deguileville does not always define these places spatially. As Mary Carruthers points out, rhetorical tropes and figures were considered vital memory-aids, and the *ductus* of a work, the pace and quality of a reader's engagement with it, was shaped by its variety of rhetorical ornaments.[51] Such variety prevents the monotony that might weaken the reader's attention and stimulates emotions (including pleasure) that imprint imagery deeper in the memory.[52] In *Le Pèlerinage*, the pilgrim might undergo some narrative event (usually a tribulation such as a battle with a vice); or he might stop to listen to a debate or a speech; or he might deliver an *ekphrasis* of an object or person. These shifts in genre effectively form the boundaries of memory-places, so that the reader can think of the poem as a series of "episodes" each gathering information under a topic heading.

All of these mnemonic elements cooperate in the passage in which Grace Dieu gives the pilgrim the staff of hope:

Or vous redirai du bourdon
Qui tout estoit d'autre facon.
Legier estoit et fort et droit
Et de bos Sethin fait estoit
Qui en nul temps ne puet pourrir
Ne pour cause de feu perir.
Au bout d'en haut ot un pommel
D'un ront mirour luisant et bel
Ou quel clerement on vëoit
Tout le païs qui loing estoit.
N'estoit loingtaine region
Quë ens vëoir ne pëust on,
Et la vi je celle cite
Ou d'aler estoie excite
Aussi com l'avoie veue
Autre foiz et aperceue
Ou mirour, aussi u pommel
Je la vi, dont mont me fu bel.

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[51] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, 122–24.

[52] In *Allegorical Imagery: Some Mediaeval Books and Their Posterity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), Rosemund Tuve argues that critics of the past have misread the poem by judging it by the logical soundness of correspondences between figure and significance. Instead, she sees the "the mixture of surprise and recognition" induced by those correspondences as the poem's chief goal (179–81). The poem, she argues, is not meant to inculcate moral messages by encoding them in allegory. Rather, it addresses a reader already familiar with a body of moral iconography and delights that reader by allowing them to recognize that iconography in witty new contexts—especially ones reminiscent of everyday life (162–63). The point, in other words, is not systematic coherence but pleasure, and Deguileville assumes the reader already knows the "information" encoded in his allegory.

Miex en amai voir le bourdon
Et miex en prisai la facon.
Un pou dessous un pommel autre
Avoit, un pou mendre de l'autre
Qui fait estoit tres cointement
D'une escharboucle estincelant.
Qui la fist et la compassa
Et qui au bourdon l'applica,
Il n'estoit pa de ceste terre,
En autre lieu le faurroit querre.
Mont fu ce la tres bien seant
Au bourdon et bien avenant,
Rien en li ne me desplaisoit
Fors de ce que ferre n'estoit;
Mes bien apres m'en appaisa
Celle qui tel le me monstra.
(Now I will tell you more about the staff, and it was of an entirely different kind. It was light and strong and straight, made of the wood of Sethim that can never rot or be consumed by fire. On the upper end there was a pommel with a round mirror, bright and shining, and in it one could see clearly all the distant lands. There was no far-away country that could not be seen in it. And I saw there the city I wanted to go to. I saw it in the pommel just as I had seen it before in the mirror, and this pleased me very much. I liked the staff even better for that and I valued all the more the way it was made. A little further down, there was another pommel, somewhat smaller than the other, made very elegantly of a shining ruby. Whoever designed it, made it and fixed it to the staff was not of this earth, and he must be looked for elsewhere. It was very fitting and proper for the staff. Nothing about the staff displeased me, except that it was not tipped with iron. But later she who showed it to me satisfied me completely about that.)
(3433-66)

In this passage, the poet "makes" the staff in a way the reader can later recreate. "Facon" can mean either the form of an object or the fashion in which it was made, and here, it means both: the description of the staff's form proceeds from part to part, allowing us both to contemplate its origin as a hand-made object and to "make" it again in our minds. The pilgrim starts by describing its overall qualities: it is "legier," "fort" and "droit"—"light," "strong" and "straight" or "upright." These images already have associated ideas—hope is light because it is easily borne, strong because it resists evil and adversity, upright because it is a quality belonging to morally upright people. But the words also convey what we might call a proprioceptive image of the staff—we imagine what holding it would feel like, how it would support our body and help us carry ourselves. The pilgrim describes the material it's made from—"Sethin" or acacia, the wood used to make the Ark of the Covenant—and says that it can neither rot nor be destroyed by fire. Again,

moral and typological significance is associated with a sensible impression: a particular kind of wood, hard and dry to the touch.[53]

Now the pilgrim moves on to the discrete "parts" of the staff, starting "au bout d'en haut," at the top end, where we find the aforementioned mirrored pommel "luisant et bel," luminous and beautiful. The narrator then moves down the staff to describe a second pommel made of a brilliant ruby. And finally, he has a word for the lower tip, which he hopes will be made of iron to preserve it and make the staff an effective weapon, but the tip is only made of wood—a feature that disappoints him. As I'll discuss below, this is an instance of the rhetorical variation necessary to the poem's *ductus*, a shift from the *ekphrastic* description of the two pommels to the tiny narrative moment of the pilgrim's disappointment.

Finally, the staff is described *again* from top to bottom, this time by Grace Dieu, who explains what each part of it represents. The mirrored pommel is Jesus Christ and the ruby pommel is the Virgin Mary; he should hold onto them both to keep himself aloft as he walks. The tip is unshod so it will be lighter and less likely to get stuck. The staff comprises what Hagen calls a "memory system," a complex object whose interconnected parts are mnemonically keyed to a series of interconnected ideas. The organization of the complex object provides the *ordo;* in our imagination, we can move from the top to the middle to the lower tip of the staff, retrieving moralized memory-images as we go. But it is important that the poet's description present these sensible descriptions in the order in which they are to be retrieved, which is also the order of imaginary construction; first, we "build" the staff in our mind, and later, we retrace that process to "read" the mental object. When Grace Dieu gives the pilgrim an explanatory gloss of the staff's parts, she goes in exactly that order, so that we practice picturing our imaginary staff while its significance is unfolded to us.

The two passes over the staff are critical to its mnemonic effectiveness. In the initial description, the staff's moral significance is latent, present only in the double meanings of words like "light," "strong," and "upright," in the typological reference to the Ark of the Covenant, etc. In visual mnemotechnics, the image comes first, before the idea it marks, because the image is, as it were, the container in which the idea is to be stored, and so it must be permitted to occupy the reader's imagination purely as a sensible thing before it can be associated with other meanings. We must be able to imagine holding the staff in our hand, gazing into its mirrored pommel, thrusting its unshod tip into the ground. We must imagine leaning on the staff and gripping the pommels (which we may not yet realize represent Christ and the Virgin) to hold ourselves up. This image—not just visual, but haptic and proprioceptive—is the thing our mind "holds onto," the thing we keep before our mind's eye just as the pilgrim keeps the mirrored pommel, and so an initial opacity to the understanding makes it more effective as a memory-image, not less.

This, by the way, might be why the poet dwells on the pilgrim's perplexity that the staff has no iron tip. A characteristic of the sensory memory is that it doesn't handle absence or negation very well. It is hard to remember that something was *not* there, because as soon as one invokes a thing by name, it is present in the imagination. Unlike the two pommels, the tip of the staff is notable for what it lacks, and given the rules that

[53] The wood's resistance to rot and fire also suggests the staff's status as an imaginary object. Images in the memory may be subject to a certain amount of material decay, but at least with the aid of memory-training, they're more durable than the objects they represent.

govern the stubbornly presence-oriented imagination, the reader is more likely to end up with a picture in their mind of an iron-tipped staff, not a bare wooden one. And so the poet spends some time describing the pilgrim's disappointment that the staff, perfect in every other way, has no iron tip. When we reconstruct the staff in our minds, that narrative detail—that the tip was remarkable for being the one part of the staff that displeased the pilgrim—will take the place of a vivid image as reinforcement or guarantee of that "part" of the memory-system.

As a last gift to the pilgrim, Grace Dieu fits him out with the poem's other major memory-system and introduces him to the poem's personification of Memory itself. First Grace Dieu presents the pilgrim with pieces of armor that represent the Christian virtues. One by one, they are described as Grace Dieu explains their significance: a gambeson marked with an anvil signifying patience, a habergeon signifying fortitude, a helmet signifying temperance of the senses, etc. As the pilgrim receives each item, he laments how heavy they are and how badly they fit him. The armor, it seems, is a bit too small for his flabby body and a bit too heavy for his weak muscles.[54] Grace Dieu, after some admonishment, answers his need by giving him a servant to carry his armor and dress him in it when he needs it. Initially, the pilgrim is dismayed that his helper is a woman, and he is also repelled by her appearance: she seems to have no eyes, until she passes him and he sees they're in the back of her neck. Grace Dieu, as usual, scolds the pilgrim for his hasty judgment and explains who this odd-looking person is:

> "Ceste meschine est nommee
> Par son droit nom et apellee
> Memoire qui rien n'aparcoit
> Du temps a venir ne ne voit,
> Mes du temps ancien parler
> Set elle bien et deviser.
> Au temps passe et par derriere
> Sont mis ses iex, et sa lumiere.
> N'est pas chose monstrueuse
> Si com cuides ne hideuse,
> Ains est chose necessaire
> A tous ceus qui veullent faire
> Leur murgoe et providence
> D'aucun sens ou de scïence."
> ("This maidservant's true name is Memory. She perceives and sees nothing of the time to come, but she knows well how to speak about and recount the past. This is not a beastly or hideous thing, as you think, but something necessary to all those who want to gather their resources and provisions from any kind of learning or knowledge.")
> (4885-4918)

Memory's odd appearance makes her highly mnemonically effective: we remember images better if they are striking, strange or grotesque.[55] Grace Dieu quickly explains

[54] Tuve sees comedy as the point of this passage. A reader would not have to spend much time interpreting the pilgrim's flabbiness as an as-yet poor capacity for resisting temptation. The fun is in recognizing in this humorous analogy a moral principle they already know (*Allegorical Imagery*, 166).
[55] Frances Amelia Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 9–10.

why her eyes are on the back of her neck: "[Memory] perceives nothing of the time to come, but she knows well how to speak about and recount the past." But memory's retrospective structure isn't just about its temporal relation to its contents. The pilgrim himself is forced into an act of retrospection when he's reproved for judging Memory's appearance; indeed, his encounter with her is structured retrospectively, as he first sees her from the front (noticing she has no eyes) and then from the back (seeing the eyes on the back of her neck). All of this seeing, misjudging, and reevaluating based on new information serves a mnemonic purpose for us. The first impression is literally that: a puzzling image that makes an "impression" in the memory due to its strangeness or monstrosity. Then, as the pilgrim reevaluates, the impressed image is linked to its meaning as explained by Grace Dieu. The image (woman with eyes on back of neck) is first made indelible by its strangeness; it is then associated with a propositional meaning ("memory looks backward, not forward") by Grace Dieu's gloss, which capitalizes on a witty visual correspondence (eyes that literally look backward), and the shock of being forced to revise one's first impression, acts as additional mnemonic glue to hold the two parts of the memory-image together. In effect, the passage builds itself around two kinds of retrospective looks—the pilgrim's and the reader's—and makes one enable the other. The pilgrim's backward glance is corrective: he sees a sight, makes a judgment, and then revises his judgment. This ordering of *his* experience enables the reader's backward glance, which is mnemonic: we form a mental image, and then we attach meaning.

Modern critics are liable to misread the exact nature of the pilgrim's mistake and correction. To us, the pilgrim might seem to commit the basic mistake of all heroes in allegorical romances: he judges what he sees by its appearance. He sees at first with a fleshly and not a spiritual eye. But his real error isn't that he trusts appearances too much. Rather, Grace Dieu chastises him for *undervaluing* memory, as we can gather from his "fit only to carry a bucket" remark, which refers to a common view that memory is a mere bucket to collect the output of the higher faculties. But the pilgrim makes this judgment before Grace Dieu tells him who the maidservant is. What is he seeing before that—Memory, or an uninterpreted signifier? Both and neither. The pilgrim isn't reading the allegory from the inside; he is a part of the allegory, which includes his mistakes. There's no way to position him as a coherent interpreting subject moving from literal signs to allegorical meanings the way the reader does. This moment of correction, therefore, is more than just a warning reader not to look with the fleshly eye. This is also what memory-training looks like: a sign is presented, and once it has been puzzled over to impress it in the memory, it is named.

Grace Dieu's defense of Maidservant Memory also makes visible a number of things about medieval memorial culture:

> "Piec'a fussent a povrete
> Les clers de l'Universite,
> Se ne leur gardast leur avoir
> Qu'il ont aquis et leur savoir,
> Quar peu vaut chose aquestee,
> Se apres l'aquest n'est gardee.
> Si ques, s'ell'a les iex derriere,
> Par ce saches que tresoriere
> Et gardienne de science

Ell'est et de grant sapience.
Et apres ce doiz tu savoir
Que tout le sens et le savoir
Que garde, elle le porte aussi
Et en touz lieus l'a avec li,
Si ques, se tu li fais garder
Ces armes ci, aussi porter
Avec toi elles les vourra,
Ne ja nul dangier n'en fera.
Aussi est fort de les porter
Com puissant est de les garder."
("The clerks in the university would long ago have become poor if they had not kept the goods they had gained and their learning, for a thing gained is worth little if it is not kept after it is gained. So if she has eyes facing backward, understand from this that she is the treasurer and the keeper of knowledge and great wisdom. And you should know then that she carries with her all the learning and understanding she guards, and she has it with her in all places, so that if you have her guard this armor, she will also be willing to carry it for you without any hesitation. She is as hardy in carrying it as she is strong in guarding it.") (4899-4918)

First, there's the idea that memory is the humble keystone holding the enterprise of learning together: without memory, learning retains no value. Second, there's the idea that memory is the seat of personal virtue, because memory provides us with the knowledge we need at the moment we need it to act appropriately. What "knowledge" do the pieces of armor gather together for us? The gambeson (armor covering the torso) of Patience, for instance, reminds us not just of the imperative to be patient, but stories and metaphors Grace Dieu hands out to explain why patience is good, how to be patient, and when patience is necessary. All of these moving parts belonging to Patience, delivered by Grace Dieu with rhetorical variety, constitute so many trailing ends of mnemonic chains that (hopefully) will get tripped whenever an occasion calling for patience arises. In medieval *memoria,* knowledge of the past is only as valuable as its appropriate deployment in a present occasion, which makes the issue of timely retrieval vitally important. Thus Grace Dieu's distinction between Memory's two functions of "guarding" (garder) and "carrying" (porter) the armor: Memory "guards" knowledge, in the sense of retaining and preventing its loss (and also as the armor is meant to guard the pilgrim's body), but she also "carries" that knowledge anywhere the pilgrim goes to make it available at the right time. (Grace Dieu later describes Memory as the one "who will go along behind you and carry your armor *to arm you when the time comes"*—"Qui' aprez toi ira derriere, / Qui tes armes te portera / *Pour armer toi, quant temps sera"* [emphasis mine].)

The distinction between Memory's two functions also invokes a fundamental idea in the theory of memory that goes back to Aristotle, of a function division between the *storage* of memories and their recollection. This has implications for how memory relates to the self, particularly in the following passage. To the pilgrim's protest that a maidservant won't be strong enough to carry the armor, Grace Dieu explains that this one is a good deal stronger than he is. However, Grace knew he would be embarrassed to let a

woman carry his things without assistance, which is why she selected a maid and not a man for the task: she hopes the pilgrim will feel obliged to share the burden. This might strike us as a joke about allegory that exposes its logical limitations: strictly speaking, the pilgrim and his memory are not separate entities, so of course he's going to "share the burden." She is him and he is her! But reading this moment as a meta-allegorical witticism misses what's going on: the extent to which the pilgrim and the pilgrim's memory are *not* the same entity. To the man who acts in the world, memory is a shadowy place from which he attempts to call forth absent things; often, medieval writers use a metaphor or hunting or fishing for this process.[56] And yet memory accompanies him everywhere, ready to help as long as he can call upon it in time.

This, I think, is why Deguileville's Memory is so humble and monstrous, so weak and odd and mute and yet, Grace Dieu insists, so hardy and strong. Memory is repulsive, embarrassingly material, as Bernard says, and yet it is the one part of our bodies that can do a job even our immortal soul can't do on its own, at least when we're alive. Grace Dieu admonishes the pilgrim to show his new maidservant a little respect:

> "Si ne l'aies pas en despit,
> Si com par devant tu l'as dit
> Qui l'as tenue pour meschine
> Qui ne doit que porter la tine,
> Ainz toi despire tu devroies,
> Et peu prisier, se tant savoies;
> Quar ce que tu ne puez porter,
> Bien portera sanz soi grever."
> ("So do not hold her in contempt—as when you said earlier that you thought her a maidservant who should only carry a bucket. But you should despise yourself and praise yourself very little, if you knew about these things, for what you cannot carry, she will carry without difficulty.")
> (4919-26)

Memory's gender and class mark her as inferior, but Grace Dieu's remark answers anyone who supposes that memory, because of its low position in the hierarchy of faculties, is nothing but an inert storage bucket for the fruits of the other faculties' more worthwhile labor. Or maybe the "bucket" refers to the worthless slop that Bernard imagines fills the memory of worldly men. For Bernard, memory represents the old self that must be forgotten, but Deguileville sees value in it. More sophisticated the reason may be, Grace Dieu seems to be saying, but it can't retain the value of the labor it does and so is worthless on its own. Even the littlest thing is a heavy burden to it, whereas memory can carry those things "sanz soi grever" ("without burdening herself"). Knowledge is material; that is why the soul needs memory.

The role of memory in the pilgrim's conversion, however, isn't simple or unambiguously positive. For all that Grace Dieu enumerates the virtues and necessity of Memory, it should strike us that in the course of the pilgrimage, the pilgrim never once manages to call upon her and put on his armor when he needs it. He needs it, of course, when he is attacked by the vices of the flesh, against whom his weak body is defenseless. When Sloth strikes him to the ground, the narrator observes, "If I had had my habergeon it would have been very useful to me then" (7250-60). When he is struck through the eye

[56] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 323–24.

by Venus's dart, the narrator points out, "It was most unfortunate that I did not have my helmet then, and that I did not have armor for my eyes." When she strikes his hands, he says, "I could have used my [gauntlets], if I had had them on and if I had been protected by them. But it is true: fools do not look before they leap." (10,260-70) Each time he is attacked, the narrator reminds *us* of the piece of armor that would have protected the pilgrim had he been wearing it—but he doesn't say the pilgrim remembered anything at all in these moments, merely that had he been armed, he would not have been wounded. So the pilgrim may know about virtue, but he never retrieves that knowledge—which is to say, he never remembers to remember. These wounds, then, are for our benefit alone, as the poem fashions his forgetfulness into reminders for us.

There does come a point, though, when it appears that the pilgrim has learned to call upon his memory more effectively, and he uses mnemonic techniques to do so. After several scenes of failure, Memory herself appears and scolds the pilgrim:

> "Di moi, pour quoi
> Tes armëures tu ne vez?
> Escuser ne te pues, quarprez
> Sui de toi, et touz jours aroies
> Tes armes prestes, se vouloies
> Ves les ainsi comme t'a dit
> Grace de Dieu et ci ton lit. . .
> Se piec'a vestu les eusses,
> Pas maintenant livre ne fusses
> Aus vielles qui t'ont a'rreste
> Et abatu et surmonte."
> ("Tell me, why do you not put on your armor? You cannot excuse yourself, for I am near you, and your armor is always ready, if you want it. You see it there, as Grace told you. . . . If you had had your armor on earlier you would not have been delivered up to these old crones who have stopped you, pulled you down and fallen upon you.")
> (8976-8990)

Memory articulates to the pilgrim what the narrator had been suggesting to us: that the pilgrim has forgotten his memory-training. This isn't surprising, given that Memory literally looks backwards: she can offer hindsight but not foresight. At this moment, though, she seems to be offering more than just a belated recognition of his failures. Rather, she is teaching him some kind of higher-order lesson about the use of memory—specifically, the necessity of remembering to remember. We can identify this as an edifying moment because we find the same retrospective arrangement we saw in Memory's introduction, and indeed in so many of Deguileville's allegorical descriptions, in which an image (or in this case, the narrative event of the pilgrim forgetting) is first displayed and then attached to verbal significance. And this moment of memory-consolidation for us seems to coincide with the pilgrim's own, when Memory's admonishment gets him at last to *look* voluntarily—"you see it there," she tells him—to turn his inner eye back upon the images of memory. The episode that follows shows that the pilgrim has learned Memory's lesson. The pilgrim is attacked by yet another terrifying figure, and once again, he is caught without his armor on—but this time, something about the figure's appearance triggers a recollection. As she approaches, he notices she carries a

hammer and tongs, and so must be a smith, which she confirms, saying, "I am lacking only an anvil." If he has one, she says, she will use it to "fashion [his] crown," but if he doesn't, her strokes will fall on him. The narrator tells us:

> A donc du noble gambeson
> Que Grace Dieu en sa meson
> M'avoit donne ou ert mise
> Derriere enclume et assise
> Me souvint, mes trop a tart fu,
> Quar pas ne l'avoie vestu.
> Trop a tart vient a armer soi
> Qui ja est entre ou tournoi;
> Assez tost elle le m'aprist,
> Mes le surplus avant me dist.
> (Then I remembered the fine gambeson with the anvil fixed to the back, the one that Grace had given me at her house, but it was too late, for I did not have it on. They arm themselves too late who are already in the battle.)
> (12,000-10)

Again, memory fails, but for the first time, the narrator actually says "me souvint," "I remembered," in the moment when the pilgrim needs the armor, though he delays the verb until after he has described what has been remembered—as if the recollection has trailed along with it the very idea of remembering. As usual, the pilgrim remembers "trop a tart," "too late," but he does remember something, which we can tell because he completes the partial sign of the figure's appearance, supplying the one piece she's missing: the anvil on the gambeson. It is as though the pilgrim has used a memory-image. If *we* remember that the gambeson and anvil represent Patience, then the figure's name, which she announces soon after, completes the sign and consolidates that memory for us: she is Tribulation, whose blows are saving if suffered with patience.

Memory's role in the pilgrim's journey toward conversion, though, remains ambivalent. We might at this point notice that we have not seen Memory herself for a long time; in fact, once she scolds the pilgrim for failing to arm himself against the Vices, she quietly disappears from the poem, as if the pilgrim's growing ability to recall his learning has made her unnecessary. But if he had simply learned to do her offices for himself, presumably the poem would end with him finally arming himself in advance of a fight. Instead, he is beaten mercilessly by Tribulation until he prays to God, for which Tribulation rewards him by conducting him back to Grace Dieu. The meaning is clear: while reason without memory can hardly amount to anything, memory, even if trained, is nothing without grace.

The same need not be true for the reader, however. As a novice monk, the pilgrim's spiritual goals are more demanding, particularly where the training of memory is concerned. In Bernard's understanding of monastic conversion, memory-training aids the novice only up to a point. It "blanches" his memories of their contamination by worldly experience and redirects his paths of recollection toward scripture—but once his senses and sensory memory have been purified and he has been inducted into a monastic daily life built around spiritual contemplation, he no longer needs *reminding* of the virtues and spiritual ends toward which he directs his life. He lives, rather, in the full presence of those virtues. Again, the poem reflects this. After the pilgrim has survived

Tribulation, Grace Dieu leads him to a cloister that is home to several noble ladies, each of whom wears a piece of his armor and who personify the virtues of monastic life. Grace Dieu names each of them—for instance, Voluntary Poverty, who has given up her worldly goods and wears nothing except the gambeson:

> "Maintenant la veisses nue,
> Se je ne li eusse endosse
> Le pourpoint que par laschete
> Baillas a Memoire a porter;
> Bien ses com on le doit nommer."
> ("You would have seen her naked now, if I had not put on her back the gambeson that out of laziness you gave to Memory to carry. You know its name very well.") (12,772-6)

If we read the poem as an allegory of Cistercian monastic conversion, this appears to be the moment when the monk finally perfects himself in monastic discipline and so no longer needs a memory at all. He puts on virtue not by calling on a private store of knowledge but by living the monastic life itself, with its daily spiritual practice and contemplation. He has no need to arm himself with virtue if he can now see it, as it were, face to face. But alongside this allegory of memory's obsolescence, the poem keeps using its mnemonic techniques. Indeed, we (if not the pilgrim) still need the memory-image of the gambeson that signifies patience in order to understand who this holy person is—an image that covers the presence of a directly revealed truth (i.e. Voluntary Poverty's nakedness) so that we, with our reliance on ordinary memory, can identify it. Grace Dieu even gives us a test: she supplies the image and lets us supply the name. So just as the pilgrim seems about to transcend his need for recollection, *we* consolidate the memory-images that the poem has guided us in composing.

Deguileville's allegory of monastic conversion is not meant to convert *us,* the worldly reader, to the monastic life. The monk, in a sense, has no memory because he doesn't need one; everything he needs to know is perpetually present, because he lives in an environment dedicated entirely to service, worship, and contemplation. Deguileville's reader, however, is a courtier, or a soldier, or a city professional—someone who remains in the world and so must transform the common experiences of worldly life into mnemonic cues. If a walking stick can become a reminder for our hope in salvation, then everything we do can be made to turn our minds toward virtuous living. The pilgrim's monastic conversion becomes a figure—and a memory-image—for our conversion to a lay Christian life.

Chapter Two
Olivier de La Marche and the Twilight of Mnemonic Allegory

If *Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine* begins to translate monastic memory-training practices into secular poetry for the lay elite, *Le Chevalier Délibéré* (1483) by the Burgundian poet Olivier de La Marche represents an advanced stage of that trajectory. Like Deguileville's poem, *Le Chevalier Délibéré* is an allegory of life as a journey, and particularly as spiritual preparation, shaped by experience, for admission into eternal life. But while Deguileville's pilgrim was a monk pursuing spiritual development, La Marche's is a knight and a courtier who more often calls on his humanist learning than on memories of Scripture. And while La Marche invokes recognizably medieval memory-training protocols, he does not offer his memory-images and places for our own use as Deguileville's could. Instead, he repurposes them as metaphors for the mechanics of memory, giving us not a meditative script but an allegorical representation of memory. Rather than seeing through La Marche's knight into a realm of mnemonic imagery, we only see him seeing. *Le Chevalier Délibéré* thus begins to show us what allegory will look like without practical deployment of the mnemonic techniques on which it was founded.

As an allegorical autobiography of La Marche's life in service to the House of Valois-Burgundy, the poem devotes much of its time to eulogizing his beloved patrons Philip the Good, Charles the Bold, and Mary of Burgundy, but for the most part, it is a poem about learning to accept death, an *ars moriendi* that offer the Burgundian dukes as models for how to die well. The pilgrim-knight begins by learning he will someday die, but rather than accepting this, he declares he will find a way to do battle with Death's two lieutenants, Accident and Debile (Accident and Debility).[57] During his quest, he encounters the sorts of personifications Deguileville's pilgrim met—vices, worldly hazards, his own inner faculties—while searching for a means of winning his battle. At first he expresses some hope that he might defeat at least one of his opponents, but as he travels from youth to old age, he learns that no amount of practical knowledge will help him win and that he can only learn to lose well. Philip, Charles, and Mary provide the ultimate examples of graceful defeat, and the poem ends on the eve of the knight's death.

Like Deguileville, La Marche depicts his protagonist's evolving attitude toward life and death as a change in how he draws upon his memory. As a young man, the knight treats memory as an instrument of practical reasoning, a storehouse of *exempla* from which he can draw to inform prudent action. As he ages and the reality of death grows closer, his optimism about the instrumental use of memory wanes. He is only saved from despair by his memory of his worthy patrons, who give him an imaginative framework for understanding his death and who help him meet it with spiritual readiness. Unlike Deguileville, La Marche does not depict these changes in how his protagonist remembers as a steady improvement, partially because he doesn't assume his reader will use his poem for the kind of meditative self-cultivation Deguileville had in mind, but also because La Marche's remembering subject has no consistent perspective on his memory,

[57] The English "accident" implies chance whereas the French defintion includes deliberate malice. The dyad of "Accident" versus "Debility" should thus be understood more as the intervention of external circumstances versus life's inherent tendency toward decay. (The Aristotelian concept of "accident" is also operative.)

no stable entity to cultivate. Each time the knight consults his memory, he does so from a different stage of life, and from that limited perspective of his circumstances, he literally sees something different. None of these perspectives are any more *right* than another, and shifts from one to the other often come as a shock. La Marche represents three memorial perspectives, corresponding to youth, old age, and imminent death, as allegorical spaces: the Cloistre de Souvenance (Cloister of Recollection), housing a collection of relics curated by the hermit Entendement (Understanding); the Cymetiere de Memoire (Cemetery of Memory) shown to the knight by the lady Fresche Memoire (Fresh or Recent Memory); and the tournament of Atropos where Philip, Charles, and Mary meet their honorable ends.[58] All of these places are in some sense the same place, but phenomenologically they are radically different, and the knight's reactions to them vary considerably, both in how they make him feel and how he understands their implications for his own life.

La Marche stands at a critical moment in the history of the memory arts, when traditional mnemotechnic methods were still known but their use was falling out of style as the requirements of humanist scholarship replaced them with different methods and technologies. La Marche's poem therefore provides more detail on how the method works than Deguileville's does, since Deguileville could largely assume his readers' familiarity with it. La Marche emphasizes its importance when the knight arrives at the house of Study—the second of the three sites of memory, to which he comes as an old man. Fresche Memoire, the lady of the house, tells him that "study" means reading not from codices or manuscripts but from the book of the memory:

> . . . qui estudie
> Lëans, il soit duit et asseur
> D'apprendre sa leçon par cueur,
> Car Memoire n'a aultre livre
> Que tel que Souvenir luy livre.
> (...whoever studies
> Therein must be instructed and sure
> To learn his lesson by heart,
> For Memory has no other book
> Than that which Remembrance confers.)
> (151.4-8) [59]

This learning by heart clearly involves images: Fresche Memoire is dressed "in a gown where Meditation was symbolized" (d'un drap ou figura Penser, 149.7) and embroidered with representations of "much of old times and new" (moult du vieulx temps et du nouveau, 150.3). And as in Deguileville, these memory-images are multi-sensory, in this case not just visual but olfactory: Fresche Memoire also wears a hat which "had a fragrance which I caught / Which was named Recollection: / Reading, listening and knowing" (Une odeur ot que je sentoye / Qui s'appelloit Rementevoir: / Le lut, l'oÿr et le

[58] The French distinction between "souvenance" and "memoire" that English typically elides is important and corresponds to Aristotle's dividing of memory into two functions, recollection and retention.
[59] Olivier de La Marche, *Le Chevalier Délibéré (The Resolute Knight)*, trans. Carleton W. Carroll and Lois Hawley Wilson, Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies 199 (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1999). Subsequent references will be cited in the text by stanza, with line numbers specified where necessary.

sçavoir, 150.5-8). Her porter Labeur (Diligence*)* explains the method of study in more detail:

> Qui Memoire vëoir vouldra
> Apprendre fault et retenir
> De ruminer le souvenir.
> (Whoever wants to see Memory
> Must learn and remember
> To ruminate upon the recollection.)
> (147.6-8)

Labeur touches on all the hallmarks of the medieval culture of memory. Again, study requires not reading new texts but meditating on texts one already knows—hence why the knight's entry must be approved by Labeur, since without a lifetime of diligent learning, the knight would not have a memory well-stocked enough to study. Moreover, the order of actions in Labeur's formula corresponds to the order of cognitive tasks in monastic reading: "learning" or decoding (*apprendre*), "remembering" or memorizing (*retenir*), recollecting (*le souvenir*), and "ruminating" or meditating (*ruminer*).[60] In addition to the tasks themselves, he includes the learning of the method among that which must be remembered: "remembering to ruminate on the recollection" (i.e. "on that which is recollected," *retenir de ruminer le souvenir*) suggests not memorizing and *then* ruminating but remembering *to* ruminate. Monks divided reading into memorizing and ruminating because a text must first be recorded in the memory before the intellect can perform more complex operations on it, but the whole process must also be learned and made habitual. As he practices the whole series of tasks—decoding, memorizing, recollecting, ruminating, and so on—each loop of the series habituates the scholar's mind more deeply to the process itself. La Marche has described not just the bare instructions for monastic reading but captured the way of life it serves. He understands the deeper reasons for the method.

Despite his demonstrable familiarity with the cultural context in which the memory arts thrived, though, La Marche doesn't implement mnemonic methods in his poem's form the way Deguileville did. He does create what Susan Hagen in her reading of Deguileville called memory systems: a thing, person, room, or building made of multiple parts, of which each part is assigned an allegorical significance. But La Marche's memory systems are far more attenuated than, say, Deguileville's staff of hope. His description of the priest Obedïence (Obedience) can serve as a representative example of the many such stanzas in his poem:

> L'aube dont il ot revesture
> Estoit de Bonne Volenté,
> L'amyt fut tissu par Mesure,
> Le saint fut de Chasteté Pure,
> L'estolle fut de Charité,
> Le maniple de Loyauté
> Et la chasuble par maistrie
> Fut pourtraicte de Preudhommie.
> (The alb in which he was clad

[60] La Marche's French specifies a distinction between memorizing and recollecting that our English vocabulary of memory doesn't.

Was of Good Will,
The amice was woven by Moderation,
The girdle of Untainted Chastity,
The stole of Charity,
His maniple of Constancy,
And the chasuble most skillfully
Fashioned of Valiance.)
(45)

Compared to the staff of hope, which the pilgrim admired in detail and Grace Dieu then interpreted for him, this description is perfunctory, lacking the same sensory richness or the emotional depth of the narrator's reactions to it. Nobody even needs to tell the knight what Obedïence's accoutrements mean, which deprives us of that temporal gap between object and idea that made Deguileville's imagery mnemonically effective. This memory-place seems more like a cue for an existing network of associations than as a script for the reader's fashioning of one. It's less a memory-place at all than a schema for the construction of memory-places, the structure without the elaborations that would make it functional. The container of the stanza form makes that structure visible: the object is named at the beginning of a line and the associated idea at the end, so that we could scan either margin to identify them all without ever attending to the negligible gap in between.

That gap, however, is not empty. La Marche relates object and idea with verbs of making—"was woven by" (*fut tissu par*), "was of" (*fut de* or simply *de)*, and elsewhere "made" (*faite*, 48.1)—that render the idea in question either the maker of the object or the material of which it is made. Deguileville never claimed that his staff was "made of" hope; it was an ordinary staff made of physical materials that Deguileville lovingly described to evoke an image in *our* mind. La Marche's memory-images belong to some other world of matter—an absurd, inaccessible one—where objects can be "made of" ideas. They have a separate, fantastical existence within the narrative that we can't imagine. The mnemonic principles guiding Deguileville's form depended on a kind of ontological continuity between poem and reader insofar as verbal descriptions of the world of the poem could mark the reader's mind with material semblances of that world. Memory may still be material in La Marche, but it's no longer a form of materiality we can participate in.

We see memory-images more closely resembling Deguileville's in the poem's first major allegory of memorization—but as we will see, La Marche problematizes both their value and their manner of use. After the knight has repented his misspent youth, he comes to the Cloistre de Souvenance, a sequestered house of learning overseen by the hermit Entendement (Understanding). The knight asks Entendement how he might defeat the champions of death, and Entendement replies that he will teach him about Accident. He leads the knight into the cloister, which contains relics, although not saints' relics—these are the weapons of Accident, objects that killed men and women from classical and Scriptural antiquity. Entendement brings them out one by one and displays them—the plowshare with which Cain killed Abel, the pillars pulled down by Samson—then briefly tells the tale of each death, exhorting the knight to "remember the objects" he sees (m'enhortant fort que je retiengne / Et que des pieces me souviengne, 50.3-4). This is an allegory of the first stage of reading: "learning" or decoding and then committing to

memory.[61] The relics represent the memory-images by which the knight will index these historical *exempla* under the topic heading of "accident" supplied by the knight's initial question. These memory-images are vivid in a way more like Deguileville's staff and armor; unlike the objects in Obedïence's chapel, they have a concrete presence and they evoke strong emotion. Moreover, they are linked metonymically to more information: the story of a famous hero's death. Each stanza acts as a container for the image:

> En cest estuy troveras mis
> Les greffes de quoy fut tué
> Cesar par esperez amis
> Qui l'ont en leur senat occis.
> Par merveilleuse cruaulté
> Accident a ce cop hurté:
> Ces choses cy nous sont certaines
> Selon les histoires romaines.
> (You will find placed in this little box
> The small styluses with which
> Caesar was killed by trusted friends
> Who murdered him in their senate
> With wonderful cruelty.
> Accident cast this blow:
> We know these things for certain
> From Roman stories.)
> (55)

The stanzas all follow this formula: first, Entendement presents the relic with a deictic pronoun or a verb of seeing or showing, then connects it to the person it killed by a chain of causes that can double as recollective associations—"*With which* Caesar was killed by trusted friends / *Who* murdered him in their senate. . . " Next, the stanza names Accident as the true agent behind the apparent causes and concludes with a textual citation. As we saw in Deguileville, the object is first presented free of narrative context and allowed to occupy the knight's sight for a few moments without competition. As the object's narrative context is unspooled, the story is linked piece by piece to the object in a chain by which it can be pulled out later. (Entendement, we'll remember, tells the knight to remember the objects, not the stories.) These narrative *exempla* are then linked in a chain to each other by the metonymic associations we're familiar with. One Biblical story might follow another (52-3), or several stories in a row might involve tyrants (62-5). One story incidentally involving a boar is followed by the story of Adonis, whose relic is the boar that killed him (67-8). Together, the relics in the cloister constitute a memory-place into which a series of texts on a single topic are gathered.

It would be possible for a reader to exploit the knight's experience and use the mental images evoked by the relics in their own memory-training. But La Marche thwarts

[61] The allegory is actually ambiguous, insofar as the relics could be interpreted as texts the knight reads for the first time or as memory-images he uses to recall those texts. The unspecified place from which Entendement fetches the relics does invoke medieval figures for the memory as an inaccessible space from which memories must be "fished", but the cloister also clearly represents an early stage of education. It might best be interpreted simply as the phase of study in which a relatively young man still sees learning as the key to all troubles.

this possibility in several ways. First, the relics are explicitly historical, which makes them function differently than the tropological staff and armor in Deguileville. To us, the relics are imaginary, not just because poetry can only present them to the imagination and not to the senses but because they do not, as far as anybody knows, still exist. In the world of the narrative, though, they are undeniably material relics. Indeed, their historical, material involvement with the events they invoke is what attracts the narrator to them and elicits his reaction. The narrator encounters these numinous objects but we do not; we perceive his material contact with them through a layer of fictionality. To imagine the arrow that killed Achilles, we picture *an* arrow, but it can't be *the* arrow.

Indeed, the relics have what classical rhetoric calls *enargeia,* a form of proof Quintilian defines as "pretend[ing] that we have before our eyes the images of things, persons or utterances." In his passage explaining *enargeia*, he is talking about things, persons and utterances that are frankly fictitious, which Deguileville does with his imaginary staff and armor—but for Quintilian, these things only need that extra degree of vividness to lend them the evidentiary force that will persuade an audience, not that the imaginary things are real, but that the speaker's claims are true. La Marche does this through the persona of his narrator. Entendement holds up the relic before the knight's eyes, even inviting him to touch it (or to avoid touching it, in the case of the poison that killed Alexander), and so the poem speaks *as if* that object were being held up, not primarily to summon a mental image but to induce something like the *belief* that these historically concrete (if lost) objects are really there. And even while La Marche lays on the rhetorical vividness—"*See here* the envenomed ring" (my italics)—he foregrounds the visual incongruities of mnemonic imagery. He lovingly develops the conceit that Entendement is actually extending forth each object to the narrator, but while we can picture this easily enough for the box of styluses, it is more difficult for the boar that killed Adonis. And how do the pillars that Samson pulled down fit in the cloister? (Illustrations that accompany the scene reflect this confusion, sometimes attempting to scale the objects properly but more often, as in the first edition of 1486, placing a ring, a pair of marble pillars, and a live boar on the same picture plane. A 1488 edition bypasses the problem and shows only a reliquary that resembles an illustrated book.)[62] Deguileville relied on mental imagery's freedom from the limitations of visual perception, giving his pilgrim the miraculous ability to see across unfathomable distances and to see multiple images in the same location at once—but La Marche tries to convince us that ordinary perception *is* taking place despite the spatial impossibilites of what the knight sees. The passage calls attention to the bizarre artificiality of mnemonic imagery in a way that makes sense if he means to represent a memory-process metaphorically but not if he wants to assist that process in the reader.

Our inability to share in the knight's communion with the relics is strengthened by the divinity that attends both the relics themselves and the entire episode of the knight's stay with Entendement—a divinity that differs in important ways from the spiritual benefits of memory in Deguileville. It had never been a settled question among Christian philosophers as to which parts of the soul belonged to nature and which to the divine, or the degree to which cognition was driven by organic processes or by spontaneous acts of

[62] Olivier de La Marche, *Le Chevalier Délibéré*, ed. Friedrich Lippmann, Illustrated Monographs 5 (London: Printed for the Bibliographical Society, 1898); Olivier de La Marche, *Le Chevalier Délibéré* (Washington: Rare Books division, Library of Congress, 1946).

the soul. The memory played a special role in this debate, with some thinkers positing the existence of both an organic and an intellectual memory, the one for sensory objects and the other for concepts, while others preferred a Platonic notion of an inborn and metaphysical memory of Forms, and still others attempted to reconcile those two schools of thought.[63] La Marche's Labeur intervenes in this debate, arguing that even classical philosophers couldn't answer this question:

> Dont vient de Memoire le don,
> Par naturelle portion,
> En corps corrupt et plain d'amer.
> Je croy, et la veul demourer,
> Que tel bien a la crëature
> Vient de Dieu et non de Nature.
> (Whence comes the gift of Memory
> By natural allotment
> Into an impure body full of anguish.
> I believe, and will stand by it,
> That such a benefit comes to a man
> From God and not from Nature.)
> (144.3-8)[64]

He goes on to say:

> Vray est que Nature le coffre
> Donnë ou Memoire se treuve
> Par l'ame qui vie luy offre,
> Par portion, et së encoffre,
> Par quoy Memoire naist et oeuvre.
> C'est dont l'ame qui la recoeuvre,
> Que Dieu fist ou Nature cesse.
> Donques Dieu a fait ma maistress.
> (It is true that Nature provides
> The coffer wherein Memory is found
> Through the soul which gives it life
> Proportionately and stores it away,
> Whereby Memory is born and works.
> It is thus the soul which retrieves
> What God has made where Nature leaves off:
> Thus has God made my mistress.)
> (145.1-8)

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[63] For an overview of Renaissance psychology including theories of memory, see Charles B. Schmitt et al., eds., *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), chaps. 13–15. The interplay between Aristotelian and Platonic influence on medieval and early modern theories of memory is also a major theme in Janet Coleman's *Ancient and Medieval Memories*.

[64] La Marche is, however, simplifying the debate, as no philosophers of his time would have claimed that memory belonged exclusively to God or to nature. The philosophical division that dominated the Renaissance was between nominalist and realist theories of memory, known as the via moderna and the via antiqua, the terms of which were established by John Duns Scotus and William of Ockham. For this debate and its long legacy, see Coleman, *Ancient and Medieval Memories*, pt. 5.

By this account, the body is more like a container or a womb for an immortal substance that must be retrieved not by an organic faculty but by an act of the immortal soul. What role, then, do memory-images play? A role analogous to a saint's relic, it would seem, as material objects of numinous power through which to conduct the spirit. A memory-image would not facilitate memory by a material process but by grace. The scholar must still work diligently to train their memory, but La Marche emphasizes the cultivation of diligence for its own sake over the efficacy of that work *per se*—Labeur claims that memory must be "sought and wooed" (*doit estre requise et attraitte*, 146.4), suggesting not cultivation but preparation to receive grace. No passage in the poem makes the supernatural essence of memory clearer than the Cloistre de Souvenance, which has both the trappings of a holy place and its spiritual requirements: before he can enter, the knight must repent, pray, and attend mass (29, 44-9), and the door through which he enters it is named Remorse (*Remor,* 50.6).

If memory is effectively sacramental, though, the materialist psychology on which the memory arts were based ceases to apply. The knight might take communion, but we do not. The knight might make spiritual contact with history, but he can't do so *for us.* Even if the objects in the cloister are only metaphorically "relics," a relic is still meant to enable our experiential participation in absent events through the persistence of that past in the stuff of the relic. Monastic reading protocols aimed at a similar goal: by meditating on a text, one incorporated it materially and digested its contents into personal experience. But La Marche's relics depend on the fiction of their miraculous preservation from material decay, and so when filtered through verbal imagery, they have an irretrievable past-ness to them that Deguileville's memory-images don't. Despite the poem's fiction that they *could* be saved, they force us to recognize that our communion with the past must traverse a vast distance of loss. Unlike Deguileville's memory-images, whose specific referents were never relevant, the presence of these relics reinforces their absence for us.

La Marche also indicates we're not meant to mimic the memory-process in the cloister by making the intended outcome of that process, as it were, a red herring. The knight looks up these texts to answer a specific question—whether anyone in history has ever held their own against Accident—but the texts only answer that question by *not* answering it. The knight is stocking his memory with rhetorical proofs about the nature of Accident, but the result is not an argument. Rather, it is a sequence of *exempla* whose arbitrary—which is to say mnemonic—order draws attention to the question's negative result. What do these stories have in common? Can we extract any kind of moral or practical advice from them? No, and indeed the thematic links between stanzas that aid the knight's memory make *us* ponder their *lack* of thematic progression. Over and over, they thwart our attempt to fashion a sequence around a moral theme. For instance, a series of stories featuring treachery and betrayal turns to Judith's slaying of Holofernes and Jael's slaying of Sisera, moving from the category of good men betrayed to that of tyrants rightfully betrayed (61-5). Judith and Jael are followed by the story of Polynices and Eteocles, in which it is not at all clear who the righteous party is, who is the tyrant or who is the traitor (66). The mnemonically expedient use of a thematic connection becomes an active refusal of a moral one. Every time we begin to detect a moral claim, every time the category joining these objects seems to be developing internal differentiation, Entendement takes out a new relic that drops us back into the general

category of "accident." But this, of course, is what "accident" is. The point of these stories is not ultimately whether the deaths were just or unjust. It is not even that all men exalted by fortune are eventually cast down. They tell us only of the incredible variety of ways a person can die, which offers no answer to the knight's original question. The lesson of the cloister inheres in the impossibility of extracting a lesson, because there *are* no practical lessons to be learned about defeating death—and so it would be pointless for us to memorize the *exempla* ourselves.[65]

In other words, although the relics serve a mnemonic function for the knight, for us they aren't really mnemonic cues so much as collective proof of life's radical contingency. Deguileville's memory-images also had to occupy our awareness as themselves before they could be put to mnemonic use, but the opacity of La Marche's relics *is* their meaning. They may be more thing-like in the sense of Bill Brown's distinction between things and objects. Each relic, in the life of the historical actor for whom it stands, was an "occasion of contingency," in Brown's phrase, an intrusion into their path to remind them that they too are a "thing among things."[66] Seen this way, the relics lose their differentiation: if one considers each narrative individually, one might be able to extract a moral lesson or discern a tragic pattern, but taken together, the stories' only consistent factor is death. To be sure, the objects are signs for the general principle of life's precariousness, but to be signs of that, they must retain some of their thing-like quality. Even as objects that teach, they can never teach the kind of knowledge that grants mastery.

Given the space I have devoted to proving that our insight has outpaced the knight's, it might seem odd to claim now that this passage is not at all about the failure of the memory arts, or even about the knight's misuse of them. His studies in the cloister are a necessary first step in medieval reading protocols, which La Marche makes clear when Entendement tells the knight to "reflect" (*muser*) on what he has seen. Medieval reading presumes that insight cannot occur during the initial learning of the text, only when the reader has meditated on it later, and this, as we will see, is exactly what happens. As a young scholar, the knight responds to these tales of human mortality in a way appropriate—and probably inevitable—for his stage of life. Moreover, this pre-insight phase has its own distinct experiential qualities, some of which are absolutely necessary—chief among them being desire. For the young man to learn, reading must be pleasurable, and indeed the knight is attracted to these texts: the lock on the door is named Desire for Learning (Desir de Sçavoir, 50.7), and when they leave, the knight laments that he "hadn't visited a quarter / Of this noteworthy place" (Je n'eux pas visité le quart / De ce lieu qui fist a noter, 72.1-2). The relics have presence, charisma, and they captivate him with the promise of further, as-yet unseen novelties:

> . . . moul marry je fuzsdx
> Et biaucop je le regrectori
> Que je ne viz tout le surplus. . .

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[65] La Marche would also assume, of course, that the reader already knows them. In his 1594 English prose translation of Acuña's Spanish version, Lewes Lewkenor includes an appendix for readers, "especially gentlewomen," who might not have read the classics, making it explicit that the inclusion of these stories depended on their being common knowledge (*The Resolued Gentleman. Translated out of Spanishe into Englyshe, by Lewes Lewkenor Esquier* [London: Printed by Richarde Watkins, 1594], fol. 54).

[66] Bill Brown, "Thing Theory," *Critical Inquiry* 28, no. 1 (October 2001): 4.

(. . . I was most unhappy
And regretted greatly
That I had not seen the rest. . .)
(74.1-3)

As the reader may have recognized by now, the meaning the relics add up to collectively—death's disregard for human variety and achievement—requires no additional evidence. In practical terms, there is nothing new to learn, no further gifts the unseen objects can grant. But the knight still wants to see more of them. They don't appeal to him as proofs serving a single argument but as varied and particular objects. His response to them is almost erotic:

. . . je prins plaisir douloureux,
Ung aspre soulaz angoisseux
Et ung delit en desplaisance.
C'est ung doubter en assurance,
C'est une seurté incertaine,
Dont je ne fus pas sans grant paine.
(. . . I took painful pleasure,
A harsh anguished solace,
And a delight in discontent.
'Tis a doubt within assurance,
'Tis an uncertain security,
From which I was not without great pain.)
(73.3-8)

His "painful pleasure," "harsh anguished solace," and "delight in discontent" all suggest the paradoxical pleasure-pain of Petrarchan desire. The knight may have come to Entendement seeking answers—"what should I *do*?"—but the outcome is something else, something more related to affective involvement. Indeed, the affective quality of his encounters in all three allegories of the memory arts will matter. In the cloister, he makes intimate and indeed spiritual contact with people of the past. That contact is premised on experiential distance—it's a narrative identification, not a visceral one—because as a young man, he doesn't yet feel the full *this could be him*-ness of these *exempla*. That too must come later. But memory is from God and study demanded the knight be sacramentally purified. This communion with history *means* something spiritually, even if he doesn't yet understand it.

The knight reflects on this youthful learning later in life when, as an old man, he arrives at the house of Study (Estude). This is the home of Fresche Memoire, who represents not just the knight's memories of his youthful study but more recent (*fresche*) things he has learned and experienced. In terms of medieval reading protocols, the house of Study is where the texts he has read over a lifetime are familiarized, thoroughly incorporated with the rest of the memories that constitute his identity. This higher-order memory-process is also represented by a space, but this space is the cloister's phenomenological inverse: a vast, flat plain on which everyone who has ever died is buried. Whereas the cloister contained discrete, fascinating objects of desire the vast majority of which were out of sight, the nearly identical tombs in the Cymetiere de

Memoire extend infinitely in all directions and yet can somehow be seen all at once.[67] Fresche Memoire emphasizes the need for the knight to *see:* "By speaking I would mislead you," she says, "but I will reveal [what I know] to your sight" (De parler je t'abuseroye / Mais a l'eul je te monstreray / Ce que j'entens et que j'en sçay,157.7-8). Everyone the knight read about in his youth is here, she says, "the eye drinks it in" (l'ueil s'y enyvre)—but so that he might "savor more surely" (pour gouster plus fermement) the truly infinite reach of death, she directs his attention to the section where those who have died within the past thirty-five years are buried (165). The knight's meditations are absolutely a sensory experience just as his reading in the cloister was, but the quality of that experience could not be more different. If the cloister argued implicitly that death is mankind's common lot, the tombs in their simultaneously visible sameness make that truth explicit. This of course is the goal of meditation: to draw forth insight from the raw material of one's learning. But for the knight, that insight contains a heavy irony. In the Cymetiere de Memoire, there's no mystery and no false plenitude, nothing practical to learn—just tombs and corpses. Once Fresche Memoire has shown the knight this place, she answers his question about how to defeat Accident and Debile: he can't.

> Le meillieur ou l'on te peut duire,
> C'est de morir tout despeschié
> Du sinderise de pechié.
> (The best that anyone can teach you
> Is to die completely cleansed
> Of the painful pangs of sin.)
> (211.6-8)

Like the cloister, the cemetery frames each death (or perhaps two or three) in a stanza that gives a name and a bit of information about the death. But unlike the relics, the tombs tell no story. The stanza merely names the dead and their titles, states whether they died by Accident or Debile, and in some cases describes the dessicated body or some identifying feature of the tomb. Most of the space is dedicated to contrasting dead's status and honors in life with their abasement in death. Brézé, Lord of Varenne and Grand seneshal of Normandy, for instance,

> Gisoit mort en celle garenne,
> Plat ou sablon et en l'arenne
> Comme la commune maisnye.
> La fut sa vaillance faillye,
> Son sens et son plaisant parler,
> Car Accident le fist finer.
> ([Brézé] lay dead in that crowded burrow,
> Flat in the gravel and sand
> Just like the common folk.
> His valor was of no use there,
> His intelligence and pleasing conversation,
> For Accident had brought about his end.)
> (183.3-8)

[67] We could read this scene as a parody of the vision of the Heavenly Jerusalem in *Le Pèlerinage*—a miraculously complete visual access not to salvation but to nothingness.

The tombs are certainly visual objects, but the knight only knows the identifies of the dead from inscriptions or other signs: Cornille, Bastard of Burgundy, for instance, is recognized "By his shield, which was barred / With lions and fleurs-de-lys" (Par my lyons et fleurs de lis / Cougnez le chevalier de pris, 182.7-8). The overwhelming visual impression made on the knight is made by the corpses themselves, all of which look basically the same: he sees the English captains Talbot and Scales "decomposed and devoured" (pourris et consumés, 174.2), King Ladislas of Hungary "eaten by worms" (mengié de vermine, 179.2), and Filippo Maria, Duke of Milan, "lying right there dead and decayed" (Mort et infett droit la gisan, 184.3). The specification of "right there" emphasizes the bodies' vivid presence and the knight's eyewitness to them, as phrases like "I clearly saw" (haultement viz, 175.5) and "I caught sight" (J'apersus, 180.1) do elsewhere. The Cymetiere de Memoire calls back to the founding myth of the memory arts told by Cicero in *De Oratore* (2.86), in which Simonides, faced with a roomful of indistinguishable corpses, remembered their identities by the order in which they sat. La Marche's knight too can only identify these once-glorious dead by mnemonic markers, which, unlike the relics in the cloister, have no narrative or material connection to the dead. The presence of the relics seemed to call dead heroes into the present in all their living particularity. All the tombs make present is the common fate of human bodies regardless of identity. At a certain point, the knight stops bothering to name them, saying only that he saw "in countless numbers" (par nombre non a extimer, 207.2) queens and bishops, popes and friars, artisans and kings, "poor, rich, simple, or clever" (povres, riches, sotz et adroix, 209.5)—all of whose bones "are so similar / That they are completely indistinguishable" (sont leurs os si tres semblables / Qu'ilz ne sont point recougnoissables, 208.7-8) At the sight of these tombs, the knight feels nothing but despair. The final insight he gains from his lifetime of learning comes not as a looked-for fulfillment but as a terrible shock.

It is tempting to conclude that the cemetery shows the knight the truth that lay under the illusions of the cloister. But the tombs too show only a partial aspect of what they represent. They bring the knight physically closer to the material fact of death, but they push him farther away from the dead imaginatively, conveying narratives that are fragmented, opaque, and stripped of articulated causes. These memory-images emphasize the rupture that the memory arts were designed to mitigate. As Fresche Memoire suggested, the knight can *see* this: while the vivid relics commemorated human uniqueness, the tomb effigy, which juxtaposes the richly appointed aristocrat with his dessicated corpse, relies on identity only to make the point that in death, identity ceases to matter. The cemetery permits no spiritual contact or commonality between the living and the dead, and in fact spirit seems to be completely absent. No possible future salvation is intimated; the cemetery exists in a disconnected present in which all of us are already (or may as well be) dead. It is a place void of personhood. And for this reason, its truth is as partial as the cloister's was. Whatever insight the knight gains from his meditations on the horrors of bodily decay, he doesn't learn what Fresche Memoire says is the place's principle lesson: how to die "cleansed of the painful pangs of sin."

The tombs teach the vanity of insisting on our own particularity, but for the knight (and for La Marche), these dead were absolutely particular in life, perhaps even personal

acquaintances.[68] This contradiction is reconciled in the poem's third and final allegory of memory, where at last the knight learns the true *ars moriendi.* Finding themselves at the end of "the path of life" (la sente de vie, 216.2), Fresche Memoire and the knight hear the noises of crowds and battle that announce their arrival at the tournament of Atropos. There, the knight witnesses a series of jousts between Accident and Debile and La Marche's patrons, the dukes of Valois-Burgundy. These are the confrontations the knight has been anticipating for himself. These are the people who know how to die well.

As a memory-place for examples of human mortality, the tournament differs from the cloister and the cemetery in one major regard: the knight witnesses the deaths himself. Here, he doesn't peruse a collection of objects, he sees things *happening*—sees people acting and feeling, striving, resisting, suffering, and falling. Each joust is a *psychomachic* allegory, beginning with Philip the Good:

> Le duc prist son bec de faucon,
> Qui fut de Fermeté cloué,
> Et Debile le Tres Felon
> Frapoit de Persecucion
> Grans cops tous plains d'enfermeté.
> Chascun ot fiere voulenté:
> L'un fiert, l'autre rabat ou maille
> En celle cruelle bataille.
> (The duke seized his pole axe
> Which was riveted by Firmness,
> And Most Fell Debility
> With Persecution struck
> Great blows all full of infirmity.
> Each one had a fierce desire;
> One struck, the other parried or hammered back
> In that cruel battle.)
> (230)

For once, the doomed man is permitted an active verb. Philip and Debile are balanced in their agency, and indeed in their interiority—"each one had a fierce desire," we are told. Philip's axe of Firmness defends against Debile's blows "full of infirmity," suggesting that for every impersonal force of necessity, the individual soul possesses an answering capacity to resist, which, though doomed to fail, can at least fail admirably. Philip's death is the first in the poem that actually provides an example for the knight to imitate, an intelligible human narrative with ethical substance. It is also the first with a place in a larger plan: at the end of the battle, Philip succumbs to Debile's strength "as ordained" (par destinee, 231.6). La Marche's announcement of that end emphasizes the confrontation between human values and indifferent destruction:

> Thus was the duke brought low,
> That noble prince defeated,
> For whom mad Atropos
> Cared no more than for a straw

[68] In stanza 166, the knight remarks that many of the recently dead are unfamiliar to him and that he will therefore skip over them, suggesting that he *was* acquainted with (or had at least heard the names of) those whose tombs he does describe.

And to whom he was laughable.
(234.1-5)

Death's laughter is answered by the honors given to the dead duke:

Lors heraulx comme bien appris
Prindrent ung drap tissu de Gloire
Et l'ont sur le noble corps mis,
Porté en terrë et assis
Ou saint lieu de digne memoire,
Ou on le trouvera encore
Quant le monde definera,
Ne jamais n'en departira
(Then the well-trained heralds
Took a flag woven by Glory
And put it over the noble body,
Buried it in the ground, placed
In a holy place of worthy memory
Where one will still find it
When the world ends,
Nor will it ever leave.)
(235)

We know that under the distinguishing marker of Glory's flag, we would find the squalor of death, but as the knight learns in the cemetery, a close look at that squalor teaches us little we can use. Even the duke's body retains its integrity as well as its place in eschatological time by resting in this "holy place of worthy memory" (saint lieu de digne memoire, 235.5). The knight's account of the duke's death and burial is itself a place of worthy memory that effaces neither spirit nor matter. In La Marche's rhymes, we can feel the continuity of time from a worthy life and death to the afterlife of memory and finally to eternal life: *gloire*, *memoire*, *encore*.

After the death of La Marche's last patron Mary of Burgundy, the reader is addressed directly for the first time:

O vous qui ce livre lisés,
Assavourez ceste adventure.
En ce beau miroir vous mirez:
Par ce trespas vous passerez;
Beauté deviendra pouriture.
La Mort, guerriere de Nature,
A charge de mener a fin
Son ennemy et son affin.
(O you who read this book,
Take well into account this adventure.
Look at yourself in this fine mirror:
Through this transition you shall go;
Beauty will become decay.
Death, Nature's assailant,
Is charged with bringing to an end
Her enemy and her friend.)

(265)

For the first time, the poem depicts the succumbing of life to death as part of a benevolent design: death "is charged" with her task, and Nature is "her enemy and her friend," as if even Nature herself accepts the rightness of this plan. But most importantly, the deaths of the knight's patrons mark the moment when what *he* learns can become what *we* learn. We might even do so by means of a memory-image. The jousts are the first allegories of memory that also offer allegories of what they memorialize, showing not the dukes' literal deaths but *psychomachic* imagery representing the inward ethical and spiritual acts of the dying. This imagery, though, seems less mnemonic than a way of encouraging the reader's identification. And while the knight learns the art of dying by seeing his beloved masters die, we share his experience not by using him as a visual proxy as we used Deguileville's pilgrim but by empathizing with his grief:

And each reader can understand
That for me there is fierce sorrow
In seeing laid out in the ground
Those three to whom I owe
Love, faith, homage, duty,
For from them I took sustenance;
They nurtured and raised me,
Which must not be forgot.
(Et peult chascun lisant entendre
Que ce m'est desplaisance dure
De voir mors et en terre estandre
Iceulx troys a qui je doy rendre
Amour, foy, homage, droicture
Car soubz eulx j'ay pris nouriture;
Ilz m'ont nourry et eslevé,
Qui ne doibt pas estres oublié.

(266)

We are asked not to exploit the dukes as memory-images but to recognize the bonds of obligation that make them worth remembering. He would, in effect, like to make his grief ours. Indeed, La Marche's word for our relation to his grief is *entendre*, which looks ahead to the end of the poem when the hermit Entendement returns to prepare the knight for death.

As they leave the tournament, Fresche Memoire cheers up the knight with "fine maxims and tales," including that of several others who have died since the knight left the cemetery. As in the cloister and the cemetery, each death is given a stanza, but there is nothing visual or even allegorical about them, just a famous name followed by a list of honors and accomplishments and then notice of an honorable defeat by Accident or Debile. These tales are conventional in a way the relics, tombs and jousts were not, and their decorous detachment conditions the knight's equanimious response to them:

Ainsi Memoire m'entretint
De motz sages et a planté
Et me fist comptes plus de vingt
Qui valent que bien en souvint
Et que chascun soit bien noté.

(Thus did Memory speak to me
In wise and plentiful discourse
And accounted to me more than twenty
Well worth remembering,
Each one notable.)
(279).

Whatever the knight learned at the tournament has allowed him to respond to these deaths with neither fascination nor revulsion, and with respect for "each one" (*chascun*) despite the uniformity of their tales. He has achieved what we might call an appropriate distance from the deaths of others: not so distant that he can't imagine sharing their fate, but not so close that horror and fear short-circuit his sympathy. The allegorical jousts have in fact revised his understanding of what "victory" against death will entail. As Entendement sits by his bedside, the knight asks his last, most urgent question: how should he conduct himself on the field of his final battle? Entendement describes the allegorical armor and weapons he will need, and concludes that by listening to his reason, the knight "will have [his] share of victory" (avoir ta part de la victoire, 315.6-8). He then adds, "Provided one does not forget Jesus Christ, / One cannot be vanquished . . . He is not dead who lives and reigns / There in the realm of glory" (Mais que Jhesuchrist on n'oublie, / On ne pourroit estre vaincu . . . Il n'est pas mort qui vit et regne / La ou est le glorieux regne, 324.1-2, 7-8). Those words *gloire* and *victoire* that the knight has dwelled on so anxiously during his quest have now been redefined in the spiritual and chivalrous terms drawn from his patrons' example: victory over death through the glory of Christ.

As didactic projects, Deguileville's and La Marche's poems are not so very different. But while the journey of Deguileville's pilgrim taught us by providing us with a meditative script, the knight's quest teaches (if it teaches at all) by example. The knight offers us his patrons as paragons of nobility, but the poem's primary instructive example is the knight himself as *he* learns from example—and this, the poem has already problematized by showing that he can only learn the lessons he needs to learn in good time, at the moments when life has prepared him to understand them. His reader (and in particular the lay elite reader who shares his values) can learn from his example only by recognizing and appreciating the affective relations he performs toward his patrons—loyalty, gratitude, and admiration.

As we look forward to the denser and more verbally intricate allegorical poetry of Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene,* La Marche's poem can appear quaint, but the very austerity of his method allows us room to detect the irony in the knight's retrospections—that is, the absolute relativity of knowledge to one's position in time. The charm of the poem's style isn't in the density of significance in each episode but in the accumulation of insight between episodes, none of which can teach us anything in isolation. Despite the universalizing claims of the quest allegory that make its narrative mostly predictable—the inevitable passage from youth to maturity to old age with their paradigmatic experiences of youthful dissolution, carnal temptation, repentence, and spiritual preparation for death that one finds in such narratives all the way back to Deguileville—La Marche says that in a sense, there can *be* no preparation. You may read my story, he says, and you will eventually live it, but for all of my teaching, each moment will still be a surprise to you. That we will know only what we are capable of knowing in the moment ironizes the poem's gestures toward lesson-making. This principle, that study and

experience only matter as material for contemplation from a future perspective we can't foresee, both affirms and undermines the idea that a well-trained memory will help us lead a good life.

Chapter Three
Stephan Batman's Reformation of Allegory

Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530's and 40's destroyed England's great centers of monastic learning. However, it also created a new problem for Protestant reformers: many of those books and manuscripts had survived, and moreover they had great value insofar as they constituted the better part of England's literary heritage. The task of rescuing the surviving books was taken on by a circle of Protestant book collectors that included John Bale, John Leland, and Bishop Matthew Parker—men who were not, as Jennifer Summit has argued, interested in the original mission of the monastic libraries. They sought rather to turn the English library "from an ecclesiastical receptacle of written tradition [in]to a state-sponsored center of national identity" by selectively preserving and redacting these books to construct "a reformist view of the English past."[69] This ideological reform of England's literary heritage involved not just weeding out the wholesome books from the dangerous ones but changing the way English people read. "[I]n the process of recovering rnedieval books for new uses," Summit writes, Parker and his circle "reshaped the past through its written records, establishing new protocols of reading that stressed the value of history and national 'posteryte' over the allegorical and contemplative literacies promoted in monastic libraries."[70]

Instrumental to these efforts was Stephan Batman, a chaplain to Bishop Parker who was also something of an author. When not engaged in pastoral duties or in gathering, selecting, and editing monastic manuscripts for Parker, he wrote Protestant polemics and produced vernacular translations of some of his monastic discoveries. The most well-known of these is *Batman vppon Bartholome* (1582), a translation of the massive encyclopedia of natural history *De proprietatibus rerum* by Bartholomeus Anglicus, but he also translated more minor works, including a Spanish allegorical poem called *El Caballero Determinado* by Hernando de Acuña (1553)—itself a translation of Olivier de La Marche's *Le Chevalier Délibéré*.

The resulting work is a verse translation called *The trauayled Pylgrime, bringing newes from all partes of the worlde, such like scarce harde of before* (1569)—an ambitious title that describes not only the reports of his narrator-pilgrim but his own "news" of what people were reading in France and Spain. The poem, composed in the fourteener couplets that were so popular at the time, harmonizes fairly well with the Parker circle's general interest in a Reformation of English letters, but isn't without its deviations. As Simon Horobin has argued of Batman's manuscript notes on *Piers Plowman*, Batman was genuinely invested in preserving the integrity of the monastic texts, and while he worked hard to distinguish their theologically acceptable elements from any "papisticall" error they contained, he often chose textual accuracy over doctrinal revision where his colleagues did not.[71] We might also blink at his decision to translate

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[69] Jennifer Summit, *Memory's Library: Medieval Books in Early Modern England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 12.
[70] Summit, 12.
[71] Simon Horobin, "Stephan Batman and His Manuscripts of 'Piers Plowman,'" *The Review of English Studies* 62, no. 255 (2011): 358–72. For an overview of Batman's manuscript collection, see M. B. Parkes, "Stephan Batman's Manuscripts," in *Medieval Heritage: Essays in Honour of Tadahiro Ikegami*, ed. M. Kanno et al. (Tokyo: Yushodo Press, 1997), 125–56.

an allegorical poem—not a genre that was enjoying any great Protestant approval at the time. But as far as Batman was concerned, allegory was a valuable didactic mode, particularly in its ability to "figure" moral concepts for the reader's greater understanding, and it shouldn't be discarded just because of its associations with Papism. His struggle to separate the wheat from the chaff are clear in the poem, and no more so than in how he understands allegory's form to operate upon the reader's memory. Because La Marche's and Acuña's poems are so rife with the imagery of Catholic devotion—monastic houses, relics, liturgical objects, reference to the sacraments and particularly penance—it is often hard to distinguish his substitutions of Protestant for Catholic modes of worship from his attempts to reduce the potentially idolatrous dangers of allegorical imagery itself. There might not even be any point in distinguishing them. His "reforms" to the allegory follow Protestant doctrinal indications: in addition to removing any references to Catholic liturgical and devotional practices, he does his best to de-emphasize charismatic presence and vision in favor of aural instruction. When his pilgrim *does* learn by seeing, it's to learn that vision must be corrected and disciplined. Batman's adaptation of La Marche's poem retains its didactic themes but robs it of its mnemonic form, despite Batman's insistence, no less than La Marche's, that memory is central to human life. His poem is not an instrument of memory-training but of direct moral instruction.

Batman isn't exactly an iconoclast—he is intrigued by the didactic power of a certain kind of "visual" language, like parable, similitude, and example. But his need to guard against imagery's potential dangers robs his allegorical images of the qualities that made La Marche's and Deguileville's mnemonically effective.[72] In particular, he doesn't allow the productive gaps between image and significance that characterize mnemonic image-making to open up, seeing them only as an opportunity for error. Since he rarely introduces imagery except to comment on its deceptiveness, no image is ever positively associated with an idea, which prevents the reader from making independent cognitive use of that imagery. Indeed, he discards the idea of composing mental imagery altogether, and moments in the poem that allude to mental imagery always cast it as a dangerous distraction.

Batman's reformation of allegory participates in a larger critique of instructive and devotional imagery that swept up both allegory and visual mnemonics in its net. Neither were entirely discarded, but reformers presented their new and improved versions in a way that distorted the old ones into straw men. Protestant critics of allegory, for instance, wrote about the image as if the human mind was helpless to resist its influence, as if an image could bypass cognition to impress itself on an entirely passive memory, when in fact, as I have argued, mnemonic allegory assumed that crafting mental imagery took active and deliberate work. These Protestant critics admit the power of visual mnemonics but insist that images be made auxiliary to verbal and noetic content—that such content must come first, both conceptually and temporally. Indeed, they subordinate images in this way precisely *because* they attribute such irresistible power to it—and so the use of

[72] Much work has been done on icons and iconoclasm in Reformation English poetry, including Ernest Gilman's well-known argument that Protestant poets cultivated an iconicity that undermined and effaced itself in an effort to visibly subordinate vision to language. I am more interested in how Batman's circumscribed visuality relates to his model of memory. For Gilman's argument about Protestant verbal iconoclasm, see *Iconoclasm and Poetry in the English Reformation: Down Went Dagon* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 31–59.

imagery they recommend is coercive in a way allegory and the memory arts weren't before.

William Tyndale doesn't discard so much as demote allegorical Biblical interpretation, refusing to grant it any authority.[73] If, as in the example he gives in *Obedience of a Christian Man*, we read Peter's cutting off of Malchus's ear and Christ's healing of it as an allegory for the killing law versus healing faith, we "borrow" from the literal sense of Scripture, we do not discover meaning that was already present:

> This allegory proveth nothing, neither can do. For it is not the scripture, but an ensample or a similitude borrowed of the scripture, to declare a text or a conclusion of the scripture more expressly, and to root it and grave it in the heart. For a similitude, or an ensample, doth print a thing much deeper in the wits of a man than doth a plain speaking, and leaveth behind him as it were a sting to prick him forward, and to awake him withal.[74]

Allegory can offer no primary truths, it can only reinforce meaning contained in "plain speaking" and "print [it] much deeper in the wits of man."[75] His words echo the tenets of memory-training and its exploitation of the power of sensory images to stick in the memory, and his vocabulary of inscription ("rooting," "graving," "printing") calls to mind Aristotle's sensory *phantasm*, which he likened to an impression left by a signet ring in the waxy material of the soul. Tyndale's allegory leaves a similar mark, a deep one, less likely to be rubbed away than one left by a mere "plain speaking." But when Tyndale speaks of allegory's rhetorical power, he almost never uses the despised term "allegory." Instead, he says "similitude" or "ensample," words associated with *enargeia*, language with a quasi-visual vividness that mimicks sensation by nearly matching the force of actual sensory impressions. Stripping the similitude of its epistemological value but leaving its *enargeiastic* force intact turns it into a reproduction technology—mnemonics in a new form, not as writing on the soul but as a printing press. Medieval memory-training leads the reader through a process of textual familiarization in which their understanding of the text develops and evolves. The meaning of the text for Tyndale, however, is a given and meets the reader's mind fully formed, so all that remains is to stamp it deeper into the wits.

The tremendous didactic power Tyndale attributes to Scriptural allegory motivates the limitations he imposes on it:

> Moreover, if I could not prove with an open text that which the allegory doth express, then were the allegory a thing to be jested at, and of no greater value than a tale of Robin Hood. . . . Thus doth the literal sense prove the allegory, and bear it, as the foundation beareth the house. And because that allegories prove nothing, therefore are they to be used soberly and seldom, and only where the text offereth thee an allegory.[76]

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[73] Tyndale demotes allegorical interpretation because he believes the Roman Church used it to maintain their authority over meaning of Scripture. In other words, the fluidity of allegorical readings gave the Church leeway to say whatever they wanted. Tyndale wants to take that authority away from the Church and return it to individual readers, but to do that, he must disavow the possibility that allegory might *mean* anything prior to its independent corroboration by "plain speaking."

[74] Tyndale, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, 158–59.

[75] Tyndale, 159.

[76] Tyndale, 159.

Because allegory is both powerful and epistemologically indifferent, it must be controlled so that it isn't used to communicate untruth. For Tyndale, allegory is a seemingly irresistible, indiscriminate technology capable of replicating messages true or false in the minds of a socially diverse, largely passive audience. Tyndale imagines the "print" of a similitude that is somehow fused with and indistinguishable from the "plain speaking" it reduces to, which means the wits receive both image and meaning at once, with no opportunity to explore the gap between the two. This, of course, is what Tyndale wants, as that gap is where error and idle fancies can fester. But this stamping of a message with the power of vivid language behind it can be used for *any* message and so must be regulated, "used soberly and seldom," not to mention distinguished from its popish implementations. This redefining of allegory as an irresistible printing technology rather than an authorial-poetic collaboration with the reader's imagination explains why certain English Protestant writers are so eager to use it, but also why they treat it with ambivalence.

Tyndale's "sting" that the similitude leaves behind might remind us of what I have been calling the shock, vital to mnemonic allegory, of a strange or arresting image that impresses itself in the memory by virtue of its initial lack of meaning, a wound that becomes an inscription. But here, too, Tyndale reverses the order in which both allegory and memory-training treat this shock. In Prudentius and Deguileville, the shock comes from outside, making an impression the psyche cannot at first make sense of, but ultimately that quality permits the psyche to incorporate it more fully, to use that impression voluntarily and dynamically. Tyndale's shock, although brought inside the psyche, remains a foreign object, not a knife carving into the wits but a goad lodged within, so that it can continue to deliver that shock over and over. Its job is to remind and awaken a passive soul that cannot remind or awaken itself, not to provide a trace of an experience that the intellect can voluntarily return to.

Erasmus' critique of imagery-based memory-training follows similar lines as Tyndale's limitations on Biblical allegoresis: he doesn't discard the old wisdom, but he reforms key elements by reversing their logical order. Like Tyndale, he worries about the temporal and logical gap between sensory image and idea, criticizing the memory-image for its purely accidental relationship to its associated matter. This constitutes "rote" recall for him: recollection without understanding. True memory, he says, must proceed *from* understanding the matter to be remembered. Once the matter is understood, it can be fit into a schema of knowledge that will preserve it as a logical element of that schema. Those logical relationships ought to be the means by which a matter is recalled, not by an arbitrary image. He explains his new method of memory-training in *De Ratione Studii:*

> Eam tametsi locis et imaginibus adiuuari non inficior, tamen tribus rebus potissimum constat optima memoria, intellectu, ordine, cura. Siquidem bona memoriae pars est rem penitus intellexisse. Tum ordo facit vt etiam quae semel exciderint, quasi postliminio in animum reuocemus.
>
> (Although I do not deny that places and images are helpful, nevertheless an outstanding memory depends chiefly on three things: understanding, order, and repetition. Accordingly, the better part of memory is to understand the matter thoroughly/inwardly. Then, order makes it such that those things which have once perished, we may again call back into the mind as if by right of return. Finally, repetition in all things strengthens us, not only here but in many matters. Thus

whatever you want to remember must be reread attentively and frequently, then examined often by us, so that if by chance it has fled, it may be restored.)[77]

Erasmus explicitly invokes the "places and images" method of the memory arts in order to discard it, but we can hear echoes of that method in what he advocates, particularly in his emphasis on order and the value of rereading. He does, however, change the relationships among the memory-training principles he retains. For one thing, the "order" he recommends now refers to logical and not spatial order, a way of securing the products of "understanding." His order serves the similar purpose of enabling the recall of absent knowledge, but instead of hunting or fishing for that knowledge in the depths of the memory, instead of following a trail laid down by association and spatial order, recollection occurs *postliminio,* a word mostly commonly used for the right of an exile to return and reclaim their privileges.[78] For Erasmus, recollection is like the restoration of a social or political order, a return of information to its proper "place" in a system. Finally, his "repetition" is not transformative—he has already told us that understanding is a precondition for recollection and not a product of it. When monks meditate on texts to deepen their understanding, they do so by rereading texts already stored in the books of their memories—which Erasmus would call memorizing "by rote." Erasmus, by contrast, urges the student to read and copy the text on the page over and over, not to learn anything new from subsequent rereadings, but simply to make the text's impression in the memory more secure.[79]

This change in how and why texts are memorized can be seen, in fact, in the Spanish translation of La Marche that Batman used. La Marche sums up the monastic culture of reading in a brief passage:

Qui Memoire vëoir vouldra
Apprendre fault et retenir
De ruminer le souvenir.
(Whoever wants to see Memory
Must learn and remember
To ruminate upon the recollection.)
(147)[80]

As I discussed in Chapter Two, the word order is vital: "learning" or decoding (*apprendre*) is followed by "memorizing" (*retenir*), then recollecting (*souvenir*), and finally "ruminating" or meditating (*ruminer*).[81] Memorization precedes rumination because a text must be recorded in the memory before it can be understood, and moreover, the process forms a feedback loop of "remembering to ruminate on that which is recollected" (retenir / De ruminer le souvenir) that habituates the text deeper and deeper into the memory. Hernando de Acuña's Spanish translation removes many of these references to medieval reading protocols:

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[77] Erasmus, *Opera Omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami*, 2:118. My translation, here and following.
[78] Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, "Postliminium," in *A Latin Dictionary, Founded on Andrews' Edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879).
[79] This model of scholarly memory in fact resembles the one in Acuña's adaptation of La Marche's House of Estude episode that I discussed in Chapter Two.
[80] La Marche, *Le Chevalier Délibéré (The Resolute Knight)* Subsequent references cited in text with stanza number.
[81] Again, La Marche's French distinguishes between memorizing and recollecting that our English vocabulary of memory doesn't.

Mas el que vér la querrá,
Sin virtud no la verá:
Porque conuiene aprendér,
Y aprendido retenér.
(But he who wants to see her, without virtue will not see her, because it is fitting to learn, and having learned to retain.)
(47)[82]

Acuña puts La Marche's "apprendre" and "retenir" into their Spanish cognates, but gone is any mention of recollection or rumination. In fact, he has simplified the whole process, so that instead of the recursive loop of learning, retaining, recollecting, and then ruminating on what was recollected, there is simply learning and retaining, with retention as the end point of learning and the fulfillment of memory's purpose. For La Marche, recollectino is not something that just happens once; it modifies the memory's contents and alters the relations between its contents each time it is done. Acuña doesn't seem to recognize a stage of knowledge-consolidation that follows learning and retaining. For him, the only secret to memory is how to keep from forgetting what you learn.

Just as Acuña indicated a major shift in thought with a small verbal adjustment, Erasmus makes a tweak to the memory arts that has big implications. Images, he says, are useful, and he recommends them, but not the same *kinds* of images:

> Illud minutius, sed tamen haud indignum quod admoneatur adiuuabit non mediocriter, si quorum necessaria quidem, sed subdifficilis erit memoria, veluti locorum quos tradunt cosmographi, pedum metricorum, figurarum grammaticarum, genealogiarum, aut si qua sunt similia, ea quam fieri potest breuissime simul et luculentissime in tabulas depicta, in cubiculi parietibus suspendantur, quo passim et aliud agentibus sint obuia. Item si quaedam breuiter sed insigniter dicta, velut apophthegmata, prouerbia, sententias, in frontibus atque in calcibus singulorum codicum inscribes, quaedam anulis aut poculis insculpes, nonnulla pro foribus et in parietibus aut vitreis edam fenestris depinges, quo nusquam non occurrat oculis, quod eruditionem adiuuet. Haec enim tametsi singula per se pusilla videntur, tamen in vnum collata aceruum doctrinae thesaurum lucro augent, haudquaquam negligendo τῷ εἰς ἄφενον σπεύδοντι, id est his opibus properanti ditescere.
> (Verbal memory may with advantage be aided by ocular impressions; thus, for instance we can have charts of geographical facts, genealogical trees, large-typed, tables of rules of syntax and prosody, which we can hang on the walls. Or again, the scholar may make a practice of copying striking quotations at the top of his exercise books. I have known a proverb inscribed upon a ring or a cup, sentences worth remembering painted on a door or a window. These are all devices for adding to our intellectual stores, which, trivial as they may seem individually, have a distinct cumulative value.)[83]

Here, Erasmus endorses memory aids that are visual and locational, but he has moved these mnemonic cues from mental into physical space, scribbling every surface of the

[82] Hernando de Acuña, *El Cavallero Determinado, Traduzido de Lengua Francesa En Castellana, Por Don Hernando de Acuña* (Madrid: Casa de Pedro Madrigal, 1590). Accessed March 13, 2014. http://www.bne.es/. My translation.
[83] Erasmus, *Opera Omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami*, 2:118.

student's domestic environment with visible reminders. The "intellectual stores" he mentions echo the treasury of memory described by medieval scholars, but now that treasury appears to be literal—not a metaphor for mental images but actual inscribed valuables. This mnemonic furniture is both more and less secure than mental imagery: more secure, because it is made of harder stuff than the materially degradable human memory, but less secure, because it remains outside the mind and must therefore work harder to get the student's attention. To compensate, it must be profuse, so the student literally can't look away. Its materiality is no guarantee; after all, memory's materiality is precisely why it must be trained so rigorously, through the technical cooperation of order, image and place. But that cooperation made the memory into an indexed book whose words could be called forth by any number of mnemonic cues encountered in everyday life. The inscribed rings, cups, walls and windows of the student's bedroom might be harder to alter or erase than the wax tablet of the memory, but they are also easier to lose (or ignore). And although they are visual, Erasmus' charts and tables are not *images*—they are words arranged into a spatial pattern not meant to accommodate the mind's preferences but to indicate logical relationships. These charts have none of the sensory richness that makes a memory-image effective. Erasmus's memory is *only* for words, and the only way to memorize words is to keep seeing and repeating them.[84]

As places and images give way to humanist technologies of memory, memory itself undergoes phenomenological changes. Medieval scholars write of a voluntary and meditative recollection process, as the student reaches into a treasure chest or casts his fishing line into the deep waters of memory. Erasmus's cups and rings, on the other hand, thrust themselves into the path of the student's perception. They must, because the student (at least as Erasmus imagines him) has handed his recollective agency over to them. If they don't take the initiative, no one will. In a sense, Erasmus's student can't remember, he can only be reminded. So Erasmus's school-room reformation creates a contradiction: by insisting that memorization shouldn't be undertaken separately from the task of understanding, he tries to fold it deeper into the vital centers of reason, but instead banishes it to the margins. And as memory moves outward, it escapes the scholar's direct control, becoming less theorized, more of an unexamined afterthought, less a true part, or partner, of the self.[85]

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[84] Erasmus's position on the question of memorization *ad rem* (for the sense) versus *ad verba* (word-for-word) is complex. He claims that the sense is more important, but also that the sense is lost without close attention to the words, and consequently the student must learn "the best in each category" while taking care neither to memorize the words with no notion of their sense nor to abstract the sense from the words (*Literary and Educational Writings*, ed. Craig R. Thompson, vol. 23–29, Collected Works of Erasmus [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978], 116). Erasmus's pedagogy focuses heavily on style, so the medieval method of memorizing *ad res* disregards the stylistic specifics that, for him, are the point of memorization. To unite the memory and the understanding as he intends, he must therefore thread the needle between memory *ad verba*, with its danger of "rote" memorization, and memory *ad rem*, which can only enforce habits of bad style.

[85] Despite my generalizing of medieval memory-training as "internal" and Erasmus's method as "external," all of these techniques combine mental habits with material practices (i.e. written notes, copying, pre-compiled textual excerpts, etc.) Scholars disagree on what is truly new about humanist reading. Some, like Ann Blair (*Too Much to Know*) argue that changes in modes of reading since antiquity have been greatly overstated, while others, following media theorists like McLuhan and Ong as well as Elizebeth Eisenstein's *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980) argue that humanism and the printing

In the passage above, Erasmus articulates an early version of the "notebook method" of commonplacing, in which the student gathers eloquent and instructive passages from the best authors and copies them into a notebook under subject headings, to be deployed later in rhetorical composition. As an educational method, the commonplace book is new, but the commonplace itself isn't, since the memory arts too figured categories of knowledge as physical spaces.[86] Similar subject headings appear in medieval *florilegia*, which resemble commonplace books in many ways. But the headings in *florilegia* are loose and heuristic, which reflects their purpose as mnemonic gathering places and not as true analytic categories. Humanist writers, by contrast, are fascinated by the organizational complexity that can be gained by moving the "places" out of mental space and into an external apparatus.[87]

In the prefatory letter to his patron, Batman describes his poem as visual in nature, but he doesn't associate that visuality with anything positive:

> . . . I haue painted foorth the fonde deuise of man, and the straunge Combats that he is daylie forced vnto, by meanes of this oure feeble nature: showing also howe euery degree shoulde, or at the least wayes ought, to frame themselues, and so aduisedly to watch that we be found vigilant watchmen, aspecting the great &

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press altered the very way we understand the text as an object and our minds in relation to it. (Methodology is implicated here; sociologists of reading like Roger Chartier, for instance, have little truck with Ong's talk of historical changes in the "sensorium," as if such a thing were accessible to scholarly investigation.) The memory arts pose an additional problem: the extent to which they were ever practiced. Even Frances Yates, who first recovered them for modern scholarship, doubted that the more elaborate methods were ever used except as a stunt or novelty, an opinion she shared with many Renaissance writers. Mary Carruthers in *The Book of Memory* and *The Craft of Thought* has argued that they were widely practiced in monastic settings (from which the thirteenth-century memory treatises come) and shown how they might have been of practical use. Her most convincing claim, as far as I'm concerned, is that scholars practiced a whole range of techniques that varied in complexity and according to context, but that all relied on a common set of mnemotechnical principles: that memory's preference for sensory objects, especially images, can be instrumentalized to retain and recall non-sensory information; that the scholar's memory is a lifelong work-in-progress that should have its own internal coherence, linked to moral and intellectual virtue; and that material books, ideally if not always in practice, are mnemonic cues for a text whose native form is in the organic memory (which is not, as Ong might argue, necessarily an "oral" memory, but is thought of as internal inscription). Actual practices and habits do not have to undergo a radical change (for instance, from wholesale memorization to complete reliance on material books, or from exclusively mental heuristics to exclusively material finding aids) for us to claim that the purpose and value attributed to particular practices changed. Visual mnemotechnics do not need to have been in widespread use for their influence to show up in a variety of contexts—something that demonstrably changes by the seventeeth century, whose discourse of memory and mnemotechnics is organized in large part around an inner iconoclasm that distrusts the visual imagination even while relying on visual regimes of various sorts, from the emblematic to the typographic.

[86] The word "commonplace" can refer both to the subject heading and to the excerpts themselves.

[87] For a discussion of three-dimensional memory technologies that take the notebook method to a literal extreme, such as Camillo's Theater of Memory, see Anthony Grafton, "The Humanist and the Commonplace Book: Education in Practice," in *Music Education in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. Russell Eugene Murray, Weiss, Susan Forscher, and Cynthia J. Cyrus, Publications of the Early Music Institute (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 141–57. Camillo's theater is probably best known from its extensive discussion in Yates, *The Art of Memory*, chap. 6. More recently, Lina Bolzoni has discussed it in *The Gallery of Memory: Literary and Iconographic Models in the Age of the Printing Press*, trans. Jeremy Parzen (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 29–34.

second coming of our lord Iesus Christ, that at what houre the theefe breake in vpon vs, wee be readie armed to withstand the same. . . (A3)[88]

Perhaps the "fonde deuise" he has painted refers only to the errors his pilgrim falls into, but his words suggest strongly that he only resorts to verbal painting to represent vice—to picture what the reader should *not* do, and thus remind them to be "vigilant" of their own propensity to err. All watching, in other words, should be watching for danger. Throughout the poem, Batman often identifies "fonde fancies" as mankind's primary distraction from proper devotion—and "fancies" are, of course, *phantasmata.* Given that he declares imagery to be inherently unreliable, it's understandable that he often works at cross purposes to La Marche's narrative.

We can see his suspicion of allegorical imagery in his adaptation of the Cloistre de Souvenance episode. Understanding (a gentleman, not a hermit) leads the pilgrim into a "roume" (not a cloister), where he has promised to show him "treasure straunge" (D3). But in the room we do not find relics. The narrator informs us that the promised treasure is there, but he quickly forgets about it, and instead of displaying his collection of valuables to the pilgrim, Understanding delivers a long speech. He declares first that he will show the pilgrim "Examples . . . Of straunge things past" (D3) and then he narrates a number of *exempla* with no mention of the death-dealing objects that acted as La Marche's memory-images. La Marche's relics, although they are objects like Batman's treasure, are also conduits of the pilgrim's empathy with people of the past. The "treasure straunge" that exceeds the worth of coin, silver, gold and gem are purely verbal treasure, the rhetorical ornaments or *copia* of precept, analogy, and example. La Marche's *exempla*, we'll recall, were bare texts that didn't yet prove anything, retrieved from under a subject heading ("accident") but not yet composed into an argument. The pilgrim's task, with Entendement's help, is to create the argument. But Understanding's argument has already been composed, and so he doesn't need the memory-images: he narrates the stories to prove his lessons and ends each one with a precept or an exhortation to act virtuously. It is unclear why Batman even bothers with the pretense of visible objects in the scene. Indeed, the removal of these objects as a principle for ordering the stories presents Batman with a challenge, since La Marche ordered them metonymically by the similarity of the objects that occasioned them and not according to any narrative or argumentative principle. But Batman does his best to replace those mnemonic links with moral argument, framing each story with a moralizing explanation that also acts as a transition from one to another.[89]

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[88] Stephan Batman, *The Trauayled Pylgrime Bringing Newes from All Partes of the Worlde, Such like Scarce Harde of before. Seene and Allowed According to the Order Appointed*, Early English Books, 1475-1640 (London, 1569) All subsequent references refer to this edition by folio number. No modern editions exist, critical or otherwise.

[89] Mary Thomas Crane characterizes the humanist method of commonplacing as one of "selection" and "framing": an aphorism or example is removed from its original context and inserted into a new contextual frame that alters its meaning, enabled by the (usually moral) commonplace headings (*Framing Authority: Sayings, Self, and Society in Sixteenth-Century England* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993]). Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton make a similar point about the "textual fragmentation" induced by commonplacing and the rhetorical style it encourages (*From Humanism to the Humanities: Education and the Liberal Arts in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Europe* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986]). Scholars are divided over how truly new and different commonplacing was from earlier modes of reading (see in particular a counterargument in Blair, *Too Much to Know*). After all, *florilegia* also organize excerpts under moral headings, and in our case, La Marche too is presenting a way of reading that

We can contrast these transitions in La Marche's and Batman's handling of the stanzas dedicated to Hercules and Caesar. First, La Marche:

> This is the smoke-blackened shirt
> In which Deianira (and unable to help herself,
> Thinking herself loved and who loved in return)
> Burned and killed in the meadow
> Noble and courageous Hercules.
> Accident staged this performance;
> You can read about it in many places
> In *The Origins of the Gods.*
> (Stanza 54)
> You will find placed in this little box
> The small styluses with which
> Caesar was killed by trusted friends
> Who murdered him in their senate
> With wonderful cruelty. Accident cast this blow:
> We know these things for certain
> From Roman stories.
> (55)[90]

As I showed in Chapter Two, La Marche begins with Entendement exhibiting an object used to kill a hero, and once the story of the death has been related—briefly and without much commentary—Entendement attributes the murder ultimately to Accident. Entendement then brings out the next object. He makes no attempt to explain what the knight should learn from these stories or to relate them to one another. Any such relationship, whether of historical proximity, circumstances of death, or motivations of the actors involved, must be inferred. We can try—both deaths are caused by people close to the hero, but Deianira's is a crime of passion and that of the senators is not. La Marche also neglects to tell us that Deianira did not *mean* to kill her husband, altering the story to make her the direct agent of Hercules's death and calling her a "murderer." For him, it is as if the poisoned shirt's role in Hercules's death were more important than Deianira's intentions. He even calls the death a "performance," suggesting that he's telling the story purely to demonstrate Accident's power.[91] The two stories together have no historical or thematic relationship to one another, making it clear that they only come in this order so the deadly objects can act as memory-images in a mnemonic *ordo*. The stanzas themselves are structured like good memory-places gathered under the subject heading of "Accident": Entendement sandwiches the narrative between his display of the

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fragments and recontextualizes examples. What seems to be different in Batman is the vigor and attention devoted to the frame as opposed to the excerpts. La Marche, as we have seen, allows his examples to exist in a loose paratactic jumble, whereas Batman devotes at least as much space to explicating the examples as he does to the examples themselves. Parataxis for him is not a tool but a danger. And critically, if he is invoking commonplacing, we never see the equivalent of the notebook; the passage doesn't mimic the process of *inventio*, but only the final product.

[90] La Marche, *Le Chevalier Délibéré (The Resolute Knight)*.

[91] Nessus the centaur lied to Deinaira about what the poison would do, saying it would insure Hercules's fidelity. When instead it caused him to burn in what was sure to be perpetual agony, he killed himself by fire, and in grief, Deianira killed herself as well. Her "murder" was thus unintentional, with Nessus being the only character who acted with deliberate malice.

object (memory-image) and his assertion that Accident wielded it, which deemphasizes any psychology in the story in favor of creating a mnemonic container for the story's bare facts.

When Batman adapts this passage, he ignores that mnemonic structure with its ambiguous associative logic and adds the rhetorical transitions and ethical framing La Marche leaves out. Here is how he renders it:

> That fonde foole *Dianira* shée, in hoping loue to finde,
> A shirt enuenomde she did sende, not witting to hir minde,
> In hope to haue got *Hercules* with hir againe to bée,
> And he therwith was poysoned, himselfe he could not frée.
> And to be brent in such a flame, by *Dolor* euer was,
> That *Nessus* fell, hir did deceyue, to late she cride alas:
> As one bereft from worldly ioye, when that he felt the smart,
> In firie flame he did consume, both body bones and hart.
> The mightie *Caesar* in likewise, to death full soone was brought,
> By such as he nothing suspect, full soone his death they sought:
> With bodkins sharpe they did him pierce, till all his bloud was spent,
> In stede of pitie irefull yre, this murther did inuent.
> Thus flickring Fame doth bost abrode, in euery lande and coste,
> The cruell facts of froward mindes, among both least and moste,
> This Tragedie is not vnknowne, nor may not slide from minde,
> Refraine therfore all irefull hate, show not thy selfe vnkinde.
> (D4)

La Marche's memory-images are gone. Instead, Batman begins by naming the killer and describing her motivations. La Marche told us only that Deianira was "unable to help herself, / Thinking herself loved and who loved in return," whereas Batman extrapolates her reasoning: she gave Hercules the shirt "In hope to haue got [him] with hir againe to bée." Like La Marche, Batman makes Dolor, his equivalent of Accident, an agent in the tragedy, but he adds Nessus back in, which gives him the chance to describe her suffering and regret for her mistake. Batman's syntax even makes it difficult to distinguish who was "bereft from worldly ioye" as a reult—whether it was Deianira in her grief or Hercules in his agony. Dolor itself means not "accident" but "grief" and so refers not to misfortune itself but to the pain it causes. The point is not the death but the suffering.

When Batman moves on to Caesar, he removes the ambiguity in La Marche's juxtaposition of stories by specifying a point of similarity: Caesar "in likewise" was killed "By such as he nothing suspect," i.e. by his friends, as Hercules was killed by his wife. And in a somewhat clumsy attempt to account for the difference in the killers' intentions, he designates not Dolor but "irefull yre"[92] as the ultimate perpetrator, which effectively removes the subject heading under which La Marche gathered his stories. He does so again when he states what the two stories are meant to illustrate—"Thus flickring Fame doth bost abrode. . . The cruell facts of froward mindes"—and concludes with a moral exhortation to "Refraine therfore all irefull hate, show not thy selfe vnkinde." The theme uniting these stories is now malice and unkindness, not untimely death. Instead of memory-places, Batman has given us the kind of rhetorical performance for which

[92] A phrase that, if we overlook its probable function of filling out the line's required syllable count, harkens back to the empty redundancies of Batman's personified virtues.

Entendement's mnemonic containers could serve as raw materials but certainly do not constitute on their own. Batman's stories are proofs in an argument—not the objects but the output of *inventio*.[93]

The irony in La Marche's scene of reading has also disappeared. Entendement's relics encouraged a kind of contemplation that didn't result in practical knowledge, and in fact made the pilgrim realize that his quest for such knowledge was futile. Understanding's lesson, by contrast, seems to contain nothing beyond its *prima facie* message—although we can't know if the pilgrim learns it, since Batman's pilgrim in no way participates in the lesson or even responds to it. He can't, because there is no discrepancy or delay between the lesson and its significance, no place for his own cognitive agency to intervene. Whereas Entendement's associative exhibiting of relics allows for an open-ended mental process, a participatory exchange with the poem that represents the rhetorical office of *inventio*, Batman's Understanding has already sifted his histories for patterns and principles to produce a finished rhetorical composition, for which we and the pilgrim are both a passive audience. The pilgrim has no opportunity to draw his own conclusions, so we read Understanding's sermon just as the pilgrim hears it. Indeed, the scene isn't truly "allegorical" at all in the sense of one experience representing or enabling another. Nothing about it needs to be interpreted. Nor is there any sense that the pilgrim mediates the experience for the reader—Understanding may as well be talking directly to us.

If this scene is meant to represent the discovery of riches in the stores of one's memory, then Batman gives us no anatomy of that memory, no sense of how it works: *how* the understanding or intellect uses it to perform the office of *inventio.* Wherever the stuff in Understanding's sermon comes from, it's from a conceptual space the poem doesn't allow us to see. Accordingly, reader and pilgrim both experience this memory as a corrective and disciplinary imposition, not as voluntary effort. This concealment of the process of *inventio* recasts reading itself as a different kind of experience. Batman's pilgrim receives his historical *exempla* pre-digested, whereas La Marche's pilgrim has something in the nature of a shocking encounter with texts that were already familiar to him. In La Marche's world, to call forth a text one has memorized still has the potential to surprise and disorient. In Batman's, that text's presence in the memory means it has already been interpreted, is already *known*. Gone also is the notion that reading is an empathetic communion with the past. With no material link to the people in Understanding's stories, the pilgrim cannot even imagine their presence.

Othere scenes are also stripped of their popishness and mnemonic qualities in the same stroke. Right before La Marche's knight enters the Cloistre de Souvenance, he attends an allegorical mass celebrated by Obedience in which the Eucharistic paraphernalia represent Innocence, Grace, Good Faith, and other religious virtues. Batman's pilgrim, however, is taken by Obedience to "a place" in which he sees the virtues not as holy objects but as personifications (D2). The passage begins as a modest *ekphrasis* but leaves the visual register quickly. These figures aren't marked by emblematic features, as Deguileville's are; Batman seems to have deliberately avoided

[93] Batman's longer line lengths also permit him a degree of prolixity, and thus room for explanatory framing, that La Marche's eight-syllable lines do not. Fourteeners were standard for narrative verse in mid-sixteenth-century English literature, but implicit in that convention is a preference for clarity and a distrust of ambiguity.

iconographic imagery, preferring to make his personifications perform the idea they represent. But this, it turns out, is hard to do with any kind of *enargeiastic* effect. So, "Iustice iustly did there iudge," and Temperance, Faith, Charity, and Hope all sing a tune set by Concord—hardly an evocative picture. These virtues more closely conform to Protestant doctrinal requirements, as they signify primarily by sound and not by appearance, and unlike the senseless stocks of idols, they are physically animated. But as personifications go, their animation is limited—they are like automata in a toy-shop window, repetitively performing the virtue they embody, and that we cannot even picture mentally. Their performance amounts merely to us reading their names over and over in different parts of speech. Even the song gets no elaboration, and leads almost at once to disappointment and lack: when the narrator reflects that he can't remain with these virtues in their beatific state outside of time, the song turns melancholy, and the next virtues he names are absent: "Sinceritie is harde to finde, and Zeale from most is fled, / Mercie and Compassion now, is thought to be near dead" (D2). One wonders how they would perform these essences as automata. What visionary experience the pilgrim does have is barely conveyed to us—Batman refuses to use the language of bodily sense to figure spiritual sight. So really, even though the pilgrim has a vision, the scene demonstrates to us that the virtues' order of being *cannot* be pictured. (It might be *heard,* but even that is debatable.) Instead of gathering ideas under images into a place like Obedience's mass, this vision of the virtues immediately disavows the visuality it only gestures toward. Doctrinally, of course, Batman was movitated to substitute personifications for Eucharistic objects to remove mediating authority from the scene—Batman's pilgrim sees the virtues "face to face," not through a priest—but this doesn't result in an experience that is any more "direct." In La Marche's mass, the virtues are the furniture of worship—instruments, not agencies or presences, to aid the narrator in his meditation. Batman's virtues, by contrast, are not things that can "belong" to or be used by anyone, and so despite their putatively greater animation and presence, they are less functional as memory-aids. The pilgrim's vision of the virtues is not a purifying ritual so much as a loss that must be compensated for. Because union with the virtues in their timeless perfection is impossible, virtue must be pursued by the comparatively less direct path of reason, which is divorced from any physical interaction with the world besides listening to speech. Indeed, Understanding's verbosity seems almost to compensate for the virtues' ephemeral song. Since Batman has removed anything for the pilgrim or the reader to "hold onto," he must repeat his message over and over.

We can see that anxious repetition of a message most clearly in the role Batman gives to his personification of Memory, who teaches the pilgrim not by showing him revelatory visions but by lecturing him. La Marche's Fresche Memoire grants the pilgrim a vision of a cemetery that brings him face to face with the reality of universal mortality. Batman's Dame Memory too takes the pilgrim to a cemetery, but hers doesn't bring the pilgrim face to face with anything. For one thing, it's not a charnel field but a valley of stately monuments to great princes, and it has a pleasurable rather than a horrific effect on him. Even then, the pleasure he takes in the sight does not reflect the truth of the place, or at least the message Memory wants it to convey:

> Marke well therfore quoth *Memorie* although these sights thée please,
> The sights not séene with *Ioue* aboue, doth bréede more ioy and ease:

For these are things though faire, yet vaine, a time to please the eye,
The life to come doth far surpasse, that iourney let vs hye.
(M2)

Even this vision representing the ethically enriching study of history (the monuments, says the narrator, clearly indicate which princes were good and just and which were tyrants whose examples are to be shunned) is in some sense deceptive, at least insofar as they induce pleasure. Even after Dame Memory sets the pilgrim straight on this matter, he is still reluctant to leave the place until she draws him away "With pleasant showe of sugred wordes." Her voice breaks the spell of vision, an external correction to his pleasure-seeking eye. But Memory doesn't limit her corrections of the pilgrim's sight to those which give him pleasure. When he bemoans his loneliness in the "ioylesse Dale" of Age where "none else [he] can espie" to travel it with him, she boosts his spirits with "wordes of comfort strong" and explains that here too his sight deceives him: by telling him of the lives and deaths of past princes, "she proued by Argument, I should not go [a]lone" (H3). In fact, the pilgrim truly cannot win: as we have just seen, when they come to the valley of monuments that *visually* proves the pilgrim is not alone on this path, Memory chastises him for taking pleasure in it.

Gone is the notion that readers might use the pilgrim's description of what he sees to compose their own mental imagery. If these sights are a lie, what positive purpose could they serve us? In Deguileville, the pilgrim's direct miraculous visions enabled our mental sight. Batman doesn't seem to attribute any qualities to his pilgrim's vision that distinguish it from ordinary vision in the mundane world. Nor does he use the pilgrim's direct sight as a mediating figure for mental imagery. Internal and external vision are conflated, and both deceive. Gone too is any stock we can take in the pilgrim's emotional responses to his surroundings. When Fresche Memoire shows the pilgrim the universal cemetery, the sight is so shockingly *free* of illusion the pilgrim almost can't handle it, and his shock is meaningful to us. The emotional resonance of the sight *is* the meaning, not, as it is for Batman, a competitor with it. Batman's pilgrim seems incapable of responding appropriately to his experiences without Dame Memory's corrections—which, again, are always verbal. In fact, sight and images are not only no longer the privileged mode of memory but its active enemy: whenever the pilgrim sees anyting, Memory must intervene to *remind* him that his eyes will always deceive him. He never learns to perform this office for himself, as Deguileville's pilgrim more or less does. Dame Memory is his constant companion, but she remains *not-him*, a voice of correction that constantly breaks into his psyche but is never quite native to it.

Dame Memory's voice acts like Erasmus's rings and cups: external linguistic cues that redirect the student's inevitably wandering attention, and that must proliferate to make up for the fact that the student can't regulate his own attention. Similarly, when Tyndale describes the deep print left in man's mind by a similitude as "a sting to prick [the man] forward, and to awake him withal," he suggests a recollective power that even when incorporated into the believer's psyche never becomes a voluntary faculty the believer can call upon at will. In Batman's, Erasmus's and Tyndale's accounts, memory is both the thing recollected and the agency that does the recollecting, a sort of independent mind within a mind that must work ceaselessly to keep one's attention pointed in the right direction.

Although we're told that Dame Memory regales the pilgrim with enriching tales from history, her ultimate value doesn't even seem to inhere in the content of those tales. Her real job is simply to discipline the pilgrim's attention. The quality of that attention, though, is not one of fixity. Memory's speech generates a certain kind of motion in the pilgrim's mind, the purpose of which is to prevent the trance-like absorption induced by objects of sight. This is not the concentrated focus of monastic *meditatio* laboring to craft vivid images in the mind. It's more like brisk, healthy exercise:

> The pleasauntst Dame is Memory, to ride or go withall,
> She mooues the minde not to forget what after shall befall.
> The chéerfulst Ladie on the way, Dame Memory is sure,
> That euer matched with Pilgrime tryde, his fancies to alure,
> Besides recouering vp the talke, that we had ouer night,
> The chéere, the banquet and repast, the pastaunce and delight.
> She had a thousand merie tales, of stories past and gon,
> Which were with wisedome enterlaste, right méete to think vpon:
> Sometime by trauayle I gan tyre, and was right dull in minde,
> But shée espying me, forthwith adrest some mirth to finde.
> (L4)

Dame Memory "moves the mind" in danger of growing "dull" with a strategic injection of "mirth," and her "merie tales" are "with wisedome enterlaste"—which is to say, they instruct and delight.[94] The inward-looking focus of *meditatio*, for Batman, is not spiritually productive but rather entrancement and torpor, the fixated vision of idolatry. The solution to this danger, presented as afflicting men of all "estates," is as much formal as moral: constant but measured mental "motion."

Batman is equally likely, however, to describe unprofitable states of mind not as motionless but as characterized by *bad* motion: the purposeless and easily redirected motion of flitting "fancies." So Memory's motion must act not only to enliven a mind grown "dull" but to to "alure" the pilgrim's ever-moving "fancies," which Batman invokes over and over as the greatest cause of moral danger. In effect, Memory must compete with the world for the pilgrim's fickle attention by imitating it, substituting a wholesome variety of experience for the random variability of worldly vanities. Again, this suggests the mind has no internal capacity to regulate itself: it can only be led around by whatever stimulus has the greater power to capture its attention. Indeed, it's difficult to tell from Batman's language whether there's any fundamental difference between a mind excited by wholesome objects and a mind excited by dangerous ones. After describing the salutary effects of Memory's conversation, the pilgrim and his companion approach a "pleasant playne":

> The bewtie of the which, to much reuiued vp my minde,
> That still I longde to be therin, but loe I was behinde:
> It showed pleasant in mine eye, that fielde so freshe of glée,
> As though from Oetas top, the Greacian lande might sée.

[94] I intentionally invoke Sidney's praise of poetry here, but also a more general description, common in the sixteenth century, of didactic art as refreshing a mind grown torpid with monotony by "interlacing" toil with pleasure. See, for instance, the prologues of Tudor moral interludes (such as Nathaniel Woodes's *Conflict of Conscience*) that associate the movement of the actors with a salutary "motion" for minds slowed by long study or indulgence.

And still the néerer it I came, the fayrer it did séeme,
Which made me muse and what it was, it caused me to déeme.
And musing on it as I rode, as many mindes are bent,
To chaunged fancies newe and straunge, graue studie to preuent.
To please the eies and fix their mindes, oft times or fangel'd chainge,
So I confesse as one of those, whose minde did often rainge,
But as I mused, Dame *Memory,* had tolde me many a tale,
But sure I wist not what they were, no more then Iacke a vale.
My minde was so bereft with toyes, and fancies that I sawe,
That what she sayd, I knew no more, then did a foolishe dawe.
(L4)

We only know we have encountered a moral danger because the narrator tells us that the place "to[o] much reuiued vp [his] minde"—that qualification of "too," that very need to mark a difference that isn't otherwise evident, reminds us that revival of a dull mind is exactly the virtue he has just praised in Memory. The only difference seems to be that Dame Memory revives the pilgrim's mind by speaking, whereas the plain is an object of sight. The pilgrim's errant, "raing[ing]" vision, we're told, causes him to lose track of what Memory is saying. Eventually she regains his attention, chastises his pleasure in the plain's beauty and declares that beauty an illusion: the plain is Time, she explains, and to others who are not as blessed in circumstance as him, it seems not beautiful but "bare, as time hath euer béene." She then disengages him from the "ravishing" sight by listing his undeserved blessings and the woes that others suffer.

The pilgrim's mental motion has one other quality that distinguishes it from the healthier motion induced by Memory's conversation: impatience. The pilgrim falls into a false anticipatory and *imaginary* motion when the beauty of the plain "revives up his mind" so much that his longing to be there nearly makes him forget that "loe [he] was behind." Unlike Deguileville, who places an attractive vision before the pilgrim that motivates his physical progress, Batman opposes purely internal motion to physical motion, making the one a delusory version of the other. Such motion, in fact, more resembles fixation, and its hallmark is that the pilgrim is drawn in before he knows *what* he's approaching. He errs, in other words, just when a poet like Deguileville would create a mnemonic effect with an image that strikes the pilgrim (and the reader) *before* it's associated with any noetic content. Qualities of Deguileville's holy city that belong to the miraculous nature of the vision—and that identify it as a memory-place—are reframed by Batman as morally dangerous. Both pilgrims collapse the distance between them and their destinations in their imaginations, but Batman's pilgrim approaches it gradually, during which he succumbs to a visual seduction, the place "seem[ing] fairer" as it grows closer, and that fairness increases his "musing" on what the place might be. He does not hold a mental image of his destination in mind as Deguileville's pilgrim does. Instead, the sight "ravishes" him—we might say seizes him—and induces a kind of hypnosis. As usual, Memory's speech breaks his trance. As he does so often, Batman opposes a solipsistic, desire-driven state of mind to the salutary effects of spoken language, which necessarily touches the psyche more or less involuntarily from the outside.[95] Since

[95] For hearing as the sense that cannot be shut out as vision can, see Gina Bloom, *Voice in Motion: Staging Gender, Shaping Sound in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 112–17.

mental images aren't in play to mediate the pilgrim's contact with the sight, vision in Batman's allegory works more or less like it does in everyday life: it's always unreliable and beauty is always a deceiving temptation.

The pilgrim's lack of agency is reflected in the changes Batman makes to La Marche's antagonists, Accident and Debile, whom he names "Dolor" and "Debilitie." Debilitie more or less reproduces La Marche's sense, but Dolor ("grief") has little similarity to Accident. In a passage with no precedent in either La Marche or Acuña, Batman's narrator explains the true significance of these two figures. They are not just the external contingencies of having a mortal body. Rather, they are a "figured shew" to warn the reader from vice:

> Debilitie doth signifie, the inward griefe of minde,
> Which doth decrease through cruell thought, therto are most assignd:
> Then Dolor he doth represent, the carking care of man,
> Whose gréedie minde séekes all to get, still doing what he can.
> (E2)

As with the sequence of *exempla*, Batman seems to feel that La Marche's poem lacks sufficient warning against vice, and so he adds a layer of meaning, effectively *re*-allegorizing these already allegorical figures who now stand not for external contingencies but for vices.[96] They represent not misfortune but diseases of the psyche indicating that psyche's lack of ability to regulate itself. Their transformation into vices explains why Batman's poem lacks La Marche's melancholy irony: for Batman's pilgrim, the fight against Dolor and Debilitie is in fact *not* futile. In fact, Dame Memory (again correcting the pilgrim's assessment) attributes positive value to them: as representatives of moribund states, they are "heralds" of death—in other words, reminders that death approaches. Memory's theme throughout has been that the pilgrim must remember he is mortal so he can prepare his soul for judgment. Every chance he gets, he's distracted from this message, usually by pursuing pleasure, or in this case by bemoaning the effects of Dolor and Debilitie, which implies they could be avoided. La Marche's pilgrim too first believes he can defeat these two champions and gradually learns he can't, but he learns to accept them, not to celebrate them as Dame Memory urges Batman's pilgrim to do. In other words, the story of La Marche's pilgrim is one of spiritual evolution shaped by life experience. Batman's pilgrim never really evolves, he simply learns that his initial responses to experience are almost always wrong.

That compulsive correction is writ large in a later passage—again, an innovation with no equivalent in La Marche or Acuña—in which Dame Memory and the pilgrim encounter Dolor and Debilitie in person (K3-4). The two knights are debating which of them will rule, and the debate ends when Atropos declares that neither of them will, as they both merely serve her (she's the one who calls them "heralds"). Batman includes an odd detail: after giving the briefest possible visual descriptions of them (Dolor has "hollow eyes" and Debilitie is "leane") he writes that "The winde was somewhat hie but

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[96] Susie Speakman Sutch and Anne Lake Prescott connect them with the irascible and concupiscible appetites. ("Translation as Transformation: Oliver de La Marche's 'Le Chevalier Délibéré' and Its Hapsburg and Elizabethan Permutations," *Comparative Literature Studies* 25, no. 4 [January 1, 1988]: 281–317); Sutch and Prescott are virtually the only American critics in the last fifty years who have given *Le Chevalier* and *Trauayled Pylgrime* any sustained attention; see also Anne Lake Prescott, "Spenser's Chivalric Restoration: From Bateman's 'Travayled Pylgrime' to the Redcrosse Knight," *Studies in Philology* 86, no. 2 (April 1, 1989): 166–97.

yet, I heard them verie playne, / How Dolor and Debilitie contended for the raigne." They're far enough away that the pilgrim can't see them very well, but he can *hear* them clearly, and the majority of their contest occurs not as physical battle but as "argument." They do fight briefly, but Atropos soon stops them to declare their conflict moot. And that conflict—specifically the debate—really only provides an occasion to list their qualities. Their speeches offer the only content worth remembering; Atropos (backed up by Dame Memory) declares the actual contest to be based on false pretenses. Again, allegorical imagery exists merely to be dismantled by verbal rhetoric.

Batman's use of imagery as a negative foil for rhetoric both strips allegory of any mnemonic efficacy and depicts human memory as essentially untrainable. Deguileville's maidservant Memory ultimately disappears from the poem once the pilgrim learns to perform that faculty for himself, but Batman's Dame Memory remains an external voice, correcting the pilgrim with constant reminders until the end, never quite catching up with his failure to control his attention. When Grace Dieu delays her interpretation of allegorical sights until after the pilgrim has absorbed them, Deguileville creates a temporal gap between the image and its associated meaning that serves a mnemonic purpose. Dame Memory's explanations, however, are belated attempts to correct the pilgrim's errors, and as such, they never quite succeed. Erasmus and Tyndale reduce the possiblity of error by insisting that any visual mnemonic devices be preceded by a thorough intellectual grasp of the open text, but Batman preserves the order of image and verbal content found in mnemonic allegory, and because this increases the likelihood that his reader will misinterpret the poem, he makes sure to follow any visual description as quickly as possible with plain didactic rhetoric—which more often than not undermines the apparent significance of the visual sign.

If Batman is so anxious about the possibility of reader error, we might ask why he writes an allegory at all. He seems to see it not as a means of "printing" rhetorical content in the mind but as a means of disciplining the reader's attitude toward perception. If his poem trains the reader to do anything, it's to treat sensory experience as a reminder that the senses lie—in other words, to internalize the poem's external voice of correction and to treat the unavoidable errors of the senses as cues to turn away from the material world. Given that, his allegorical imagery is essentially without content, merely the occasion for the plain rhetorical performances of figures like Understanding and Dame Memory, who often seem to address us directly while the pilgrim stands by, momentarily extraneous. In the speech of these fictional characters, we hear the unmistakable voice of Batman the beleaguered minister—sometimes overtly, as when the pilgrim describes his absorption in the fair field of Time that causes his attention to wander from Dame Memory's words:

> I was much lyke then as I thought, to some that I did knowe,
> Which oft doth come in preaching place, where truth doth bud and growe
> To Sermons as they vsed when as, I was at home in rest,
> To which full many well I knowe, would oft be readie prest:
> And yet when as they were in place, their dueties for to héere,
> So many toyes and fancies fonde, before them did appéere.
> That oft when preacher had left off, if one should them desire,
> They could as many wordes declare, as sea burne in the fire,
> And knew as much their duetie then, when Sermon ended was,
> As Linus in Lupercall wood, to helpe Pans priest sing Masse.

(L4)

Batman repeats a common complaint among Church of England ministers that worshippers come to sermons not to receive their edifying "dueties" but to be entertained, and once there, to be distracted from the preacher's words by "fancies fonde."[97] This, of course, was the unintended consequence of replacing the sensory richness of church services with the spoken word, of centering the service not on the sacrament but on the sermon. Even this reform, ministers complained, wasn't sufficient to turn churchgoers' minds to the true essentials of worship. Spiritual leaders, it seems, will always be playing catchup no matter what devices they try to wrangle their flock's attention.[98] Batman puts his hopes in allegory, but in spite of an optimism about its didactic efficacy that is far greater than La Marche's, he can't bring himself to trust his reader to contribute actively to their own edification. Meanwhile, the very form of narrative developed by medieval allegorical poets, as I hope I have shown, demands the reader's voluntary labor. Allegory asks its reader to collaborate with it, and its form can't serve its purpose unless the reader puts in as much as the poem gives out.

Spenser, as I will argue in the next chapter, solves the problem Batman couldn't solve and successfully adapts an older literary form to a new context in which the reading and pedagogical practices that shaped that form have largely disappeared. He does so by using it not to discipline its reader's memory but simply to represent how memory works, both the individual memory and that of an entire culture, the collective brain of the Western literary tradition. Unlike La Marche, Batman doesn't show us the inner mechanics of memory because ultimately he doesn't see it as having any internal mechanics at all. Spenser, although he occupies a context much closer to Batman's, harkens further back to medieval allegorists like La Marche, giving us a glorious anatomy of his own time's model of memory, and although that model owes more to Erasmus's rings and cups than to the memory arts, the memory arts have a greater (if ghostly) presence in *The Faerie Queene* than they have in *The Trauayled Pylgrime.* Batman's poem, though, has a respectable legacy in that it will help us see that presence more clearly than we otherwise might.

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[97] For preachers' frustrations with their audiences, see Laura Feitzinger Brown, "Brawling in Church: Noise and the Rhetoric of Lay Behavior in Early Modern England," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 34, no. 4 (2003): 955–72; for more general complaints about distractions in church services, see John Craig, "Psalms, Groans and Dog-Whippers: The Soundscape of Sacred Sspace In the English Parish Church, 1547-1642," in *Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Will Coster and Andrew Spicer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 104–23.

[98] Jeff Dolven (*Scenes of Instruction in Renaissance Romance* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007]); and Julian Yates (*Error, Misuse, Failure: Object Lessons from the English Renaissance* [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003]) both offer valuable discussions of the failures of early modern pedagogy in general and the skepticism that attended its methods.

Chapter Four
How to Move Through a Spenserian Memory-Place

The Faerie Queene is often remembered as a series of locations. C.S. Lewis describes the "allegorical cores" of the six books around which a "purely fictional fringe" is arranged: chance encounters between knights and distressed ladies, weeping squires and wild men, who trace winding paths through the poem until the hero knights are drawn, as if magnetically, to the House of Pride, or the Temple of Venus, where moral themes are concentrated into a form that the hero can encounter face-to-face.[99] Angus Fletcher analyses *The Faerie Queene* as a dialectic of spaces that encourage certain kinds of motion: the digressive motion of wandering in the labyrinth and the purposive movement toward the interior of the temple, the paths of complication and revelation.[100] Spenser's temples are, of course, literal temples (or caves, or castles, or houses), which the heroes visit between bouts of errancy, often to undergo an ordeal. And so we are encouraged to think of the poem, which is otherwise difficult to schematize, as a string of narrative crises framed, as it were, by the spaces they take place in, and to think of those spaces and the heroes' movements as mutually constitutive.

The first critic to connect Spenser's places with the memory arts was Maurice Evans, whose book about *The Faerie Queene* drew on Frances Yates's seminal *Art of Memory* that had been published just four years earlier. Evans attributes a particularly mnemonic quality to House of Mammon and the House of Busirane because they are divided into discreet rooms or sections, each containing dazzling, strange, symbolic objects, through which the hero proceeds sequentially. For the heroes, the objects are temptations, but for us they are memory-images. Evans sees Spenser's engagement with the memory arts as straightforwardly didactic, comparing him in fact to Tyndale, who valued scriptural allegory only for its capacity to "print" the truth of the open text "deeper in the wits of man."[101] Spenser uses memory-images, Evan says, to "impress his message" on his readers' memories for later application in situations requiring moral discernment.[102] As he himself notes, though, not all of Spenser's places take full advantage of the memory arts' imagistic resources. The House of Holiness in particular would have served perfectly, "with the significant images firmly placed in their topographical niches, so that the tour of the building would have brought the whole of Christian doctrine to mind." He concludes that the richness of the imagined spaces are less important to Spenser than the logical order in which they're encountered, suggesting "an affinity with Erasmus and the line of humanists who had little use for the traditional art of memory."[103]

In this chapter, I argue that Evans is absolutely right to identify the Houses of Mammon and Busirane as memory-places but that he is wrong to conclude Spenser has created them to serve any straightforwardly didactic purpose, or that Spenser is

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[99] C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), 353.
[100] Angus J. S. Fletcher, *The Prophetic Moment: An Essay on Spenser* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971).
[101] Tyndale, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, 159.
[102] Maurice Evans, *Spenser's Anatomy of Heroism: A Commentary on "The Faerie Queene"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 80.
[103] Evans, 81.

interested, as Erasmus was, in replacing a "spatial" with a "logical" order.[104] I will show rather that Spenser, much like La Marche, invokes the visual and spatial principles of the memory arts to allegorize memory-processes themselves, and that he plays with the rules of classical and medieval memory techniques to represent not given knowledge but different ways of reading, knowing, and thinking. These memory-processes, moreover, are not confined to those of the individual human mind. The poem gives us not images for idiosyncratic use by an individual but a universe of imagery with its own unfathomable structure and agency that exists outside of any one self. Even La Marche, whose memory-places are also more representational than mnemonically functional, showed us essentially an individual cognitive process. The memory-processes Spenser depicts in *The Faerie Queene* are those of an entire civilization—and Spenser's age was particularly aware of how complex and ultimately impossible a task it would be to comprehend such a "memory." This vast cultural mind, which we cannot know but which forms the basis of who we are, is what Thomas Greene has called the *mundus significans*:

> . . . a vast, untidy, changeful collection of techniques of meaning, expressive devices feasible for communication, a vocabulary grounded in the spoken and written language but deriving its special distinctness from the secondary codes and conventions foregrounded at its given moment.[105]

This is our world of thinkable thoughts, and yet it is only the most recent link in a chain of evolving cultural formations whose progenitors are *not* thinkable. Spenser and his contemporaries were well aware of this alien remnant of the past within the present, awash as they were in an unprecedented sea of texts yet troubled by how inaccessible this accumulated knowledge and letters was to their conscious understanding. In his account of the Renaissance's mourning for what they can never know about the classical authors, Greene writes:

> . . . a past is formative: visibly or obscurely, it shapes us, filling our names with content and setting the conditions of our freedom. Yet neither as individuals nor as communities can we remember all of that past which has made us what we are and has bequeathed us those instruments, institutions, and languages which allow us the chance to survive. . . . We cannot remember all . . . because much that is formative has been written down inaccurately or not at all and because the language of past observers diverges to some degree from our own. Thus we are formed by a past that is slipping into indistinctness, playing roles whose rationales are fading, moving into a future with leaking signifiers.[106]

The Faerie Queene describes this exact state of affairs, this cultural memory that is so radically unaccommodating to the individual mind not simply because of the scholar's limited time and ability—there is simply too much to read—but because no single interpretive position can exhaust the potential meaning of any text, and no act of historical imagination can recreate the lost *mundus significans* from which the present springs. The urgency of assimilating classical civilization's vast textual heritage despite this newly recognized obscurity of its contents motivated new scholarly technologies such as the notebook method (or commonplacing) and the printed textbook, technologies

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[104] For my discussion of Erasmus's criticism of the memory arts, see Chapter Three.
[105] Thomas M. Greene, *The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry*, Elizabethan Club Series 7 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 20.
[106] Greene, 10.

that could handle a greater volume of information than the old memory arts but that also pushed the scholar's memory into more external, less intimate spaces. For Spenser, this is the kind of space where memory lives—outside, yet all around.

The answer to the problem of our alienation from our origins, Spenser suggests, is not to pursue a greater, more comprehensive understanding of the past, but to compose new texts out of the often opaque fragments of the old—to use, as it were, its material remains to think through the problems of the present. In his proem to Book 2, he advises those readers who think his "history" is made up:

> That of the world least part to vs is red:
> And dayly how through hardy enterprize,
> Many great Regions are discouered,
> Which to late age were neuer mentioned
> (2.proem.2.1-4)

These lines suggest not that the old books are wrong but that the world *already contains* histories of which we are unaware. For Spenser, this vast region of knowledge we don't yet possess justifies his tale of faerie land as "matter of iust memory"—that is, entirely new texts created from memory's materials, not unprecedented or *ex nihilo* but also not merely predictable extensions of the old. This at least partially blind creation provides a kind of answer to those inaccessible regions in the records of antiquity. As his example of the New World with its as-yet unknown histories suggests, the obscurities of the past can only be compensated for by forward-looking acts of discovery. Isabel MacCaffrey suggests as much in her reading of *The Faerie Queene* as a common space structured like the imagination (a faculty, I would add, that classical and Renaissance theories of the soul identify closely with the memory) which gives allegory "the power to objectify the realm of possibility"—in other words, to place what exists and what only potentially exists on the same ontological plane in order to discover paths to those possibilities.[107] Spenser would agree—"Why then should witlesse man so much misweene," he writes, "That nothing is, but that which he hath seene?" (2.proem.3.4-5). But it does not, I would argue, follow that his poem will therefore *reveal* that which is unseen. It will reveal, rather, their potential consequences, their possible future traces.

Because the cultural change produced by this fictive discovery occurs not by rational analysis but by, as Greene says, the metonymic drift of "leaking signifiers," Spenser represents it not, as Maurice Evans would have it, in terms of humanist logical order but through the unpredictable recombinative associations of the memory arts. To analyze how this representation works, I will focus on the two places Evans singled out, which are in fact two of Spenser's "evil" memory-places: the House of Mammon and the House of Busirane. These episodes are so illustrative precisely because they have been designed by tyrannical "authors" to fix a particular cultural formation in place, and so we can see in them a contest between two sets of authors—Mammon and Busirane, and Guyon and Britomart—for control over a textual tradition that will always in the end

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[107] *Spenser's Allegory: The Anatomy of Imagination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 23–24. MacCaffrey and I differ insofar as she thinks such an imaginary world "requires the preliminary possession of a complete and stable body of belief appropriate to the theme in hand," which in Spenser's case for her is a belief in "an 'objectively' valid relationship between material and transcendent being." I do not dispute that Spenser believes in such a relationship, but I disagree that the "possibilities" his heroes pursue have any necessary relation to a reality more transcendent than recorded human thought.

resist fixity.[108] Mammon and Busirane do their best to conceal the historical forces that are nevertheless baked into their Houses' very structures, and as the heroes move through these houses, they follow associative chains that lead off the authorized paths, chains of images that have an independent potential to intersect, condense, and reconfigure into new structures their putative authors can't control.[109] By taking unanticipated paths through these textual labyrinths, the heroes have the opportunity to explode the conceptual universes their hosts have tried to pass off as timeless and universal—although, as we will see, some exploit that opportunity more successfully than others, and always within a limited range of possibility. As Greene writes, "[t]he major author declares himself through his power in extending and violating the *mundus*, a power so dynamic and fruitful as to alter it irreversibly. Yet even his violations have to be understood in terms of the norms they challenge."[110] Britomart, I will argue, accomplishes such a "violation" (a fraught choice of words I imagine Greene did not foresee) more successfully than Guyon, but even she can push the limits of her signifying world only so far.

The spatial organization of the Houses themselves reflects the simultaneous entanglement with and alienation from history that characterized the Renaissance for Greene. Because the Houses are both gathering places for centuries of intertextual exchanges and perverse attempts to impose a univocal message on that multiplicity, they don't act like the well-behaved memory-places described by Cicero in *De Oratore*. Spenser makes his memory-places spatially and visually weird, violating the rules of visual hygiene that Cicero and others established for memory-images. This results in memory-places that are radically *un*accommodating to heroes and readers alike, containing spatial absurdities, visual paradoxes, and descriptive ambiguities that not only make it hard to tell what the characters are seeing but what relation *we* have to their seeing. Do Guyon and Britomart, like Deguileville's pilgrim, see *for* us? Are they exemplary readers who show us how to read—or how not to? And what of the narrator—can their report be assumed to represent an authoritative perspective on the action or coincide with the characters' perceptions? The answer to all of these questions is almost certainly no. A major sign, for instance, that we cannot assume the hero to be a proxy for

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[108] Most critics who discuss memory in *The Faerie Queene* focus on Book 2, Canto 9 and the chamber of Eumnestes. I will not do so, not only because that passage has been thoroughly covered elsewhere, but because the House of Alma is less illuminating of memory as a site of interpretive and authorial contest. Unlike Mammon and Busirane, Eumnestes is a benevolent and impartial custodian of the human record, and even if his scrolls are not always legible, they are far more reassuring in their stability and accommodation to human understanding. The House of Alma, in other words, represents the homology between human and collective memory that the Houses of Mammon and Busirane problematize—a homology that Deguileville might have endorsed but Spenser and La Marche would not. For discussions of memory in the House of Alma, see Summit, *Memory's Library*, 121–35; and Rebeca Helfer, *Spenser's Ruins and the Art of Recollection* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), chap. 4.

[109] Carol Kaske considers "pairs and chains" of images repeated with a difference (in a pattern she likens to Scriptural *distinctio*) to be "one of the poem's few unifying devices" and claims the poem must first and foremost be read in terms of these "intratextual relations," although these images are also the means by which the poem draws in its intertexts (*Spenser and Biblical Poetics* [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999], 17–20). Her claims and analysis have been invaluable to me. I differ from her, though, insofar as she believes Spenser uses these repeated images to imitate the Bible and thus to encourage the poem to be read as if it were the Bible.

[110] Greene, *The Light in Troy*, 20.

the reader is that Spenser transforms the medieval principle of *ductus* into a narrative element—from the quality of the *reader's* movement through a text to narration of the *hero's* path through space, including not just their direction but pace, degree of choice, and mode of perceiving their surroundings. And unlike the paths of the first-person narrators in Deguileville and La Marche, their movement from one memory-place to the next can't be identified with the reader's, because the boundaries *between* memory-places in *The Faerie Queene* are just as strange as the places themselves, and often places in their own right. What appeared in Deguileville as shifts in tone and genre acquire bodies in Spenser—as doors, rivers, empty deserts, even as the passage of time—and Spenser lingers inside these thresholds, slowing down to examine what for a practitioner of the memory arts would be a simple step from one ordered element to the next. The pace and narrative variety of our reading experience do partially depend on the heroes' twists and turns, but not in any homologous way, and we are in the position, as we are so often in Spenser, of reading about other people reading and then wondering what the one has to do with the other.

That relationship between our *ductus* and theirs is so complicated because, as the heroes wander among memory-images, the paths available to them vary according to who they are, dispelling any illusion that the poem might contain a single path for *us* to follow. Guyon and Britomart are each forced into a particular subject-position by the spatial organizations of the Houses which afford only certain kinds of movement. In the House of Mammon, Guyon is addressed as the intended "audience" of the place, and therefore his path, controlled by Mammon, is mostly just "forward." (He would in fact die if he turned aside.) But the House of Busirane does not address Britomart so much as interpellate her, concealing the presence of its maker—she does *not* have a guide—and surrounding her with spectacles that cast her as a passive victim. She is, however, free to choose her path where Guyon is not, precisely *because* the House doesn't recognize her as a subject, and this allows her to see through its false claims. As a female reader-author excluded by the phallo-centric discourse of Ovidian and Petrarchan love poetry, she can only move forward by dismantling Busirane's literary construction of eros and chastity and composing its materials into something that affords her a place in the tradition. In effect, to get through the House, she must invent a new virtue. Guyon, who pursues a known and established definition of temperance and so is already "recognized" by the tradition around it, keeps *trying to be temperate* without intervening in the idea of temperance itself, failing to recognize that "temperance" is neither a stable concept nor one he can enact with full knowledge of what he is enacting. Only at the end of his sojourn in the House of Mammon does he begin to recognize the insufficiencies of his conceptual framework, and even then, he reacts with panic and collapse—whereas Britomart, who has no way to pursue her goal and be virtuous as her culture presently defines it, has no choice but to remake that framework.

Critics who discuss Spenser's allegorical Houses often assume they're governed by a Protestant model of right and wrong reading, crediting their sign-encrusted interiors with the given-ness of Scripture and leaving the heroes only with the task of interpreting them correctly.[111] Thus Guyon's and Britomart's time in their respective houses of

[111] Carol Kaske suggests as much: "By allusions to the Bible, by imitations of its structure, style, and method of presentation, by calling on prevalent habits of Biblical reading and listening, Spenser shapes his

temptation are presumed to result in just that—temptation, with their ability to distinguish good from evil determining whether they succeed, fail, or succeed with qualifications. But if, as I argue, these places have no extra-subjective meaning, there *is* no "right" way to interpret them, and reading them must exceed mere recognition of objective moral danger.[112] Otherwise, they would only be "recognizing" the frozen textual configurations Mammon and Busirane want them to see. The authorial wills of the Houses' masters must therefore be subverted by tactical *mis*recognition. This is not interpretation as explication of the given but as re-writing.

That the heroes do not walk through a world of given signs but by their very movement provoke these signs into new configurations marks *The Faerie Queene* as what Gordon Teskey calls "a thinking poem." Teskey (whom I have objected to elsewhere but without whom my understanding of *The Faerie Queene* would be very different) sees the poem as a brain, though not merely a reflection of the poet's brain:

> . . . a plurality that leads away from the one, branching out unexpectedly in all directions, but re-entangling with one another later on, in fantastic complexity, and with no common destination in view—indeed with no destination for any particular filiation or path, like the vast entanglement of neuronal dendrites in the brain. This is thinking that does not try to get out of itself at its destination, disembarking, so to speak, on an answer to thought that is not itself part of the thinking, that is, of continual questioning.[113]

Like history itself, he says, "[y]ou cannot run Spenser's thinking backwards."[114]

Guyon in the House of Mammon

Given that my topic is weird memory-places, it is appropriate that Guyon begins his adventure with Mammon stuck in a space *between* places. Having escaped his previous encounter, he plods along "through wide wastfull ground" without finding any new adventures, and still without his horse or the guidance of the Palmer. As he plods, he "euermore himselfe with comfort feedes, / Of his owne vertues, and prayse-worthy deedes" (2.7.2.4-5), until he stumbles out of that non-place and non-time into Mammon's glade. What seemed like an empty gutter between episodes acquires dimension and content, becomes a "place" in its own right. What was *in* that in-between place? Guyon's

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poem so as to make his audience read, mark, and inwardly digest it as if it were the Bible" (*Spenser and Biblical Poetics*, 17).

[112] Christopher Burlinson raises another objection to the claim that heroes who visit Spenser's houses are meant primarily to engage with their contents hermeneutically. A visitor to a great house would not, in fact, normally engage in the sort of iconographic explication of its paintings and tapestries that critics expect Spenser's heroes to do. They would be aware that such art was there to demonstrate the master of the house's power and wealth, and its viewing took place in a closely circumscribed ritual in which the host explained how the art's imagery related (often iconographically) to his family's history and influence. Visitors to the galleries holding these objects would thus recognize them first and foremost as sites of social negotiation, and that the objects themselves would mean what their owner wanted them to mean (*Allegory, Space and the Material World in the Writings of Edmund Spenser*, Studies in Renaissance Literature, v. 17 [Cambridge, UK: D.S. Brewer, 2006]). The admiring reactions of Redcrosse and Britomart to the tapestries in the Castle Joyous, for instance, which focus on the objects' sumptuousness and craft, would be a far more normative way to look at them than attention to their hermeneutic possibilities.

[113] Gordon Teskey, "Thinking Moments in 'The Faerie Queene,'" *Spenser Studies* 22 (June 1, 2007): 114.

[114] Teskey, 118.

complacent rumination on his own virtue, apparently. As he moves without advancing, Guyon rereads a book he already knows, or thinks he knows—not to gain new insights from it or to improve himself spiritually but to reassure himself of his own already-achieved perfection. It is in the midst of this liminal waste that he encounters Mammon, who presents him with a blown-up version of his fantasy that he already knows all there is to know about temperance, and that this knowledge is fully legible and not subject to change. Guyon enters Mammon's House because in spite of his conviction, he seeks reassurance of his knowledge—and so without realizing it, has already begun to feel its limits.

The House of Mammon is a treasure-house of knowledge, albeit one *in malo*.[115] Certainly, the wealth there represents, well, itself—the temptations of material gain—but as we have seen in Deguileville, La Marche, and Batman, wealth is a common figure for knowledge, and since the classical period, the memory has been figured as a treasury. Quintilian calls the memory "the treasure-house of eloquence";[116] the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* calls it "the treasure-house of the ideas supplied by invention."[117] The memory is imagined as a container in which the student stores the fruits of his education—proofs, places of argument, and rhetorical ornaments—in a container from which he may draw material for composition. In *Le Pèlerinage,* Grace Dieu explains the reason we need this container: "the clerks in the university would long ago have become poor if they had not kept the goods they had gained and their learning, for a thing gained is worth little if it is not kept after it is gained."[118] The store-house of the memory does not just hold treasure but gives it its value—that which makes it currency and not just stuff. Like Deguileville, Hugh of St. Victor considers the memory arts necessary for putting knowledge into circulation, calling the memory a *sacculus* ("money-pouch") and comparing memory-images to coins stamped with likenesses that confer value and currency.[119] The wealth in Mammon's House, though, doesn't circulate. When Guyon stumbles on Mammon in his dell, he finds him surrounded by wealth:

> Great heapes of gold, that neuer could be spent:
> Of which some were rude owre, not purifide
> Of *Mulcibers* deuouring element;
> Some others were new driuen, and distent
> Into great Ingoes, and to wedges square;
> Some in round plates withouten moniment;

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[115] The terms *in bono* and *in malo* are Kaske's, and refer to a pattern of imagery identified by medieval Biblical exegetes in which an image appears twice, once under the sign of good and once under the sign of evil (*Spenser and Biblical Poetics*, chap. 2).

[116] *The Orator's Education*, trans. D. A. Russell, Loeb Classical Library 124–127 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), sec. 11.2.

[117] Marcus Tullius Cicero [Pseudo-Cicero], *Ad C. Herennium: de ratione dicendi (Rhetorica ad Herennium)*, trans. Harry Caplan, Loeb classical library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954), sec. III.xv.28-xxiv.40.

[118] Guillaume de Deguileville, *The Pilgrimage of Human Life (Le Pèlerinage de La Vie Humaine)*, trans. Eugene Clasby, Garland Library of Medieval Literature, Series B 76 (New York: Garland Publishing, 1992), ll. 1.4915-24.

[119] Hugh of St. Victor, *Didascalion*, trans. J. Taylor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), sec. I.i, cited in Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 45. For a more comprehensive catalog of this trope of the memory as a treasury or a storage container for objects of value, see Carruthers, 37–55.

But most were stampt, and in their metall bare
The antique shapes of kings and kesars straunge and rare.
(2.7.5.2-9)

If we think of literary traditions, like gold, as matter that changes over time under the labor of men, then Mammon's heaps of gold seem to represent all stages of that evolution laid out at once. But the very metaphor of metal ore's refinement into coins highlights how absurd such a scenario would be. Texts *aren't* like gold insofar as more recent ones cannot be thought of simply as refined states of older ones; ancient authors are not ore waiting to become coins. Returning to Greene's view of literary history, there *is* no possible perspective from which all records of human thought could be present and transparent to one another. And in fact Mammon's attempt to make them so seems to have robbed them of their currency by freezing the flow of exchange: even the stamped coins are stamped with the images of "kings and kesars straunge and rare," which is to say, they are too old to be valid currency. Mammon is in fact a hoarder of this thing-like, history-less knowledge, hastening "to remoue aside / Those pretious hils from straungers enuious sight" the moment Guyon appears. And while the "hollow earth" in which Mammon hides his gold is indeed a treasury, it is the opposite of Hugh's money-pouch, removing it from the transactions in which it would *have* value.[120]

The House of Mammon, with its uncirculating and unrefreshable wealth, makes a good mnemonic gathering-place for what Guyon thinks he already knows. And it is an unusual memory-place in that its memory-images function negatively. Whatever Mammon shows Guyon, Guyon rejects, and this pattern of offer, refusal, and counteroffer suggests that rejection and refusal are *how* Guyon keeps virtue in mind. I remarked in Chapter One on the memory arts' indifference to negation: if a mental image is summoned, it is *there*, which means it can serve as a mnemonic cue both for a thing and its opposite. Guyon seems to remember everything he knows by picturing its opposite—or by picturing an *in malo* version of what he seeks *in bono*. He declares that he seeks "another good" from the good Mammon represents, but the only visible symbol he can offer is its demonic double. And what *does* Guyon think temperance is—what unitary idea does he hope or expect to find at the center of the House of Mammon? Appropriately, it is temperance as self-containment, the strict protection of reason and the sovereign self from the contamination of the body, the senses and the affects, from any porousness between self and world—in short, the same removal from external transactions that Mammon's House embodies. Kasey Evans shows how the Palmer teaches Guyon this notion of temperance: Guyon begins Book 2 with an overwhelming empathetic response to Amavia's plight, but the Palmer schools him into suppressing it, displacing Guyon's empathy with its potential loss of self onto the more distant objective of revenge, diverting his commiseration with the common lot of humanity into a conviction that a virtuous enough man can wash the stain of sin from the flesh. Evans argues that from the beginning of Book 2, Spenser shows us two temperances, but one of them comes to efface the other and denies that the concept has any kind of history. Thus

[120] I owe my reading of this passage to David Landreth, *The Face of Mammon: The Matter of Money in English Renaissance Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), chap. 1, which discusses in particular the relation of money's matter to its historicity in ways that were especially helpful to me.

Guyon's juvenile notions of temperance must be recast as intemperate—and this is the notion of temperance he recognizes in the House of Mammon.[121]

The House is a trained memory full of deliberately composed memory-places that can be navigated by a spectator. But unlike a typical trained memory, it purports to contain not just the wealth gathered by an individual but *all* wealth, including wealth never seen by the eyes of men. This violates the fundamentally accommodational, heuristic purpose of the memory arts, which are premised on the assumption that the memory has "contents"—contents that may be out of sight at times and altered in their relations among themselves but which nevertheless *exist.* Mammon's House contains knowledge that *doesn't* exist—or rather, that has never been known and can't be directly known, that must remain unseen even as it exerts a determining influence on what *can* be seen—and the House's lie is that it can make this knowledge miraculously present for Guyon to peruse. We are reminded over and over that an ordinary human mind could never see what he sees—but given that what he sees lies, that might be an advantage.[122]

Spenser conveys the paradox of this gathering place for absent knowledge by breaking the rules rhetoricians prescribe for good memory-places. For instance, Cicero recommends that these places be "clearly visible" and placed at "moderate distances," and that they contain images that are "lively, sharp, and conspicuous."[123] The *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* advises that the orator choose locations that are "deserted" of people "to keep their outlines sharp," "of moderate size and medium extent," "neither too bright nor too dim," and "approximately thirty feet" apart.[124] The *Ad Herennium* author insists that the orator observe a *real place* and make a mental painting, which he will then repaint in his mind's eye, which is understood to work very much like external vision. As such, the places have an embodied observer, which is why the author includes the remarks about distance and lighting conditions that seem overliteral to us. The House of Mammon, however, has both an embodied observer and an unembodied one—us—and we are reminded that Guyon is permitted to see things we can't. Accordingly, Spenser goes out of his way to describe places the mind's eye could not possibly reconstruct, even while doubling down on the enargeiastic language of texture and weight and light-reflecting surfaces.

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[121] "How Temperance Becomes 'Blood Guiltie' in 'The Faerie Queene,'" *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, SEL, 49, no. 1 (2009): 35–66.

[122] It has been noted that Guyon is quite literally superhuman as well, being a faery, but I am reading his special abilities more as a function of his fictiveness, which—like that of Deguileville's pilgrim—permits him to "see" that which isn't, outside of its verbal representation, actually there. Far more interesting than the question of special faery powers, however, is that of the degree to which he is actually tempted by the House of Mammon, and thus the degree to which his and the reader's experience are meant to align. Harry Berger Jr. discusses at length the nature of Guyon's exemplarity—that is, should he be read as an Everyman subject to the same temptations as we are, or is he a paragon of moral excellence whose resistance to temptation is meant to throw the reader's fallibility into sharp relief? Berger takes the latter side: "the reader is meant to react to the horror and the allurements of Mammon's cave," he says, "[b]ut he is then meant to see that Guyon does not react to them." This means, however, that the House of Mammon makes an "impression" on the reader that goes over Guyon's head. In essence, he sees less than we do because he is more excellent than us (*The Allegorical Temper: Vision and Reality in Book II of Spenser's "Faerie Queene"* [Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1967], 9–34).

[123] *De Oratore*, sec. 2.358.

[124] Cicero [Pseudo-Cicero], *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, secs. 3.19.31-2.

The most paradigmatically visual thing in Mammon's House, that which would most impress the eye and bring it the most pleasure, is gold. It is the House's unifying visual motif, and it's what (arguably) encourages us to consider this passage so "visual" in the first place. But Spenser never offers this gold to our mind's eye without also taking it away. Case in point, Mammon's coat:

> His yron coate all ouergrowne with rust,
> Was vnderneath enueloped with gold,
> Whose glistring glosse darkned with filthy dust,
> Well yet appeared, to haue beene of old
> A worke of rich entayle, and curious mould,
> Wouen with antickes and wild Imagery. . .
> (2.7.4.1-6)

Is the gold visible or isn't it? Is it on top of the rusted iron or underneath it—and if underneath, how can an underlayer "enuelop" an outer one?[125] Can we *see* the gold's "glistring glosse" although it is "darkned with filthy dust"? At first we might think so—"Whose glistring glosse darkned with filthy dust, / Well yet appeared. . . " the narrator says—but we are fooled by syntax, because what "appears" turns out to be the coat's strange and antique workmanship, not its glister. Spenser creates a similar if simplified version of this effect later:

> Both roofe, and floore, and wals were all of gold,
> But ouergrowne with dust and old decay,
> And hid in darkenesse, that none could behold
> The hew thereof. . .
> (2.7.29.1-4)

We can't see the gold, he adds, because the only light in the room is "a faint shadow of vncertain light" (6). It's almost as if Spenser intentionally violates the *Ad Herennium's* advice: "neither too bright nor too dim." But this goes beyond dimness*;* this is a deliberate confusion of dark and light, a *chiaroscuric* double-negative. The passage gives us a recurring theme in Mammon's House: that everything in this place is *hidden,* none has ever been seen by mortal eyes or even touched by the sun (except, one presumes, the pile of gold that Guyon found Mammon "sunning.") So alongside these descriptions of gold that only *potentially* "glisters," Spenser lays the idea that the contents of Mammon's House literally *can't be seen*—except by Guyon. So by all rights, we should be excluded too. When a poet narrates a character seeing a sight, it's easy for the reader to adopt the fiction that they are "seeing" as well. Spenser targets this fallacy. We "see," if seeing for a reader means summoning mental images attached to certain descriptive words, but only so that Spenser can tell us we *don't* see. He has made a memory-place full of invisible memory-images.

So, these are bad memory-places, much too dark. They're also too crowded. In one room, Guyon finds:

> richesse such exceeding store,
> As eye of man did neuer see before;

[125] Samuel Johnson thought Spenser meant the coat is "lined" with gold, but the Oxford English Dictionary hasn't found any other uses of the word in this sense, which suggests all the more that Spenser intends a certain confusion here. See "Envelop, v.," in *OED Online* (Oxford University Press), accessed March 25, 2018, http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/63056.

Ne euer could within one place be found,
Though all the wealth, which is, or was of yore,
Could gathered be through all the world around,
And that aboue were added to that vnder ground.
(2.7.31.4-9)

There is of course no real "image" for a mnemonically minded reader to seize on here—what does "richesse" look like?—but even if we were in Guyon's place and actually seeing this room, it would break the rules of the memory arts by containing too many objects (not to mention, one assumes, badly spacing them). But this room goes even farther than that. It's not just "crowded" but numerically absurd. The wealth in this room doesn't represent a specific quantity of wealth, it represents "wealth" itself and thus can't be counted—and yet the language of the poem tries to count it anyway, telling us that what Guyon sees here represents even *more* than if all the wealth in the world (above ground or below, past or present) were added to the wealth he sees here. This visual symbol (whatever it looks like) is so vast that it has swallowed what it symbolizes, not just a sign but the thing itself and indeed *more* than the thing itself. Spenser reminds us of an idea we saw in Deguileville: that mental space is not spatially limited, that memory can contain vast things—anything the human eye can see, the mind can contain. The point of a memory-image is to help us conceptualize that which isn't visible and thus is harder for our minds to grasp, but in the House of Mammon, the human eye *can't* see what's gathered there, not only because the past and present wealth of the world "Ne euer could within one place be found," but because the poet's description confuses the countable with the uncountable.

Guyon himself doesn't seem troubled by any of this. If he's visually confused, we don't hear about it, and more to the point, he and Mammon seem to agree on the meaning and importance of what they're seeing. There's no confusion over what kind of temptation each room contains—for Guyon, images turn smoothly into argument much the way they did in Batman's poem. After gazing at the room, Mammon articulates that temptation and Guyon refuses it without haggling over any hermeneutic issues in the room itself. These memory-places may fail *us*, but they work great for Mammon and Guyon, leading them smoothly through the places of their debate. Critics have suggested this indicates our moral inferiority to Guyon (and thus our inferior vision),[126] but I would offer instead that it represents *Guyon's* delusion that what he sees is a reliable (if negative) index of absolute facts. Guyon does not seem to realize, for instance, that he is something of a co-author of this place. Mammon is the owner of the house and Guyon's guide, but Guyon determines their direction by his objections to Mammon, who then selects another room as a reply. In fact, when Mammon and Guyon are engaged in their forensic debate, the House of Mammon is on its best behavior as a memory-place, particularly in the ease of passage between places. One might say that passage is too easy. The interior of the House itself, despite its horrors, is quite orderly: the rooms are strung together in train-car fashion with Guyon being led (mostly) without impediment from one to the next.[127] The doors even open spontaneously, as if obeying Mammon's will, and as Mammon and Guyon move deeper into the house, the doors' eagerness to open increases. The first door

[126] See note 22 above.

[127] This sequential ordering of the rooms, with minimal articulation of their spatial relationship to each other, is what led Bender to compare them so deprecatingly to memory-places.

"To him did open, and affoorded way," like any inanimate door might invite or "afford" passage through it—but the next one "opened of his owne accord" (7.31, as if not requiring an external will at all (although the ambiguous "his" could suggest Mammon's or Guyon's "accord" as well). The third door "forthright / To him did open, as it had been taught: / And shewd of richesse such exceeding store. . . " (7.35)—suggesting that this door has learned, that it and not Mammon is showing Guyon the riches inside the room. The place becomes, in effect, akin to the externalized memory-places I discussed in Chapter Two, which co-opt the act of recalling from the student and make the student a spectactor to what ought to be an active labor.

These first rooms of the House (up through the hall of Philotime) all proceed very much like classical Ciceronian memory-places with their images distributed across an ordered sequence of backgrounds. This clear, intelligible sequence represents the orderliness of the debate between Mammon and Guyon, who share a basic consensus on the issues involved and how the argument ought to go. But because Guyon believes them to be on opposite sides, he misses how the debate gradually unravels its own premises. The *loci* of the debate are as follows. When Mammon offers him wealth in the first room and Guyon says he prefers chivalric "honours" to "worldly mucke" (2.7.8-10), Mammon replies that wealth *can* supply honor and "glory," to which Guyon replies that he could never accept wealth that was ill-gotten. Mammon presents the next places as an answer to Guyon's question—"Come thou. . . and see" (2.7.20.5)—and shows Guyon the origins of his wealth, tempting Guyon not just with the wealth itself but with its "fountaine" (2.7.38.6). When Guyon refuses it again, Mammon leads him into the hall of Philotime, "love of honor," returning to the objection Guyon never quite answered: what distinguishes the honor Guyon pursues from that which Mammon offers? Guyon never does articulate the difference between his glory and Mammon's in a way he himself doesn't later undermine—he criticizes it for its reliance on "guile" and its exploitation of man's "frailty" but himself escapes Mammon's final offer by guile, sophistically deprecating himself by invoking the frailty he disclaimed. That word "frailty" acts as a subject heading for the next place. When Guyon rejects Mammon's ersatz honor with a disingenuous appeal to his unworthiness and "fraile flesh" (2.7.50.3-4), Mammon takes him to the Garden of Prosperina, where the challenge posed to temperance by mortal frailty comes to a head. There, Mammon disappears from the narration and Guyon wanders through it as if alone—having, as the poem later puts it, "beguile[d] the Guyler" (64.9) and become his own guide. By trading places with—or absorbing—his opponent, Guyon reaches the boundary of his basic assumptions about temperance.[128]

This conceptual limit is marked by a spatial transition, when the orderly, more normative memory-places of the House begin to lose some of their orderliness. The places of Mammon's House so far have been enclosures to hold knowledge. The Garden of Proserpina, however, is an ambiguous indoor-outdoor space, a region of the deep interior of the House that is open to the elements and also to the adjacent, seemingly

[128] For this summary of the Mammon's and Guyon's debate, I have relied heavily on A.C. Hamilton's commentary on stanzas 9–63 found in *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A. C. Hamilton (London: Longman, 1977), 225.

limitless underworld.[129] It doesn't seem spatially unusual when Guyon first enters it, but the objects inside it lead his eye around and then outside the space, into a place that seems to be nothing *but* boundary—a place that doesn't enclose but inverts space into endlessly expanding concentric circles. As Guyon ventures into this non-place, he wanders beyond the limits of temperance as a fixed concept. Indeed, all of the spatial inversion in these final portions of the House of Mammon represent the fact that Guyon's self-containment model of temperance is itself turning inside out. But its contradictions are all internal—Guyon reached the garden by following the same path he follows from the beginning.

The garden is a memory-place built on somewhat different principles from Cicero's ordered backgrounds—and it is no accident that this type of memory-place demands more labor from the scholar, more active choice between paths the eye could take. The garden behaves much like the memory-places described by Thomas Bradwardine—a picture whose component images are not separated by visible boundaries but are linked in a visual chain.[130] Such a picture does have conventions: one starts in the middle, then moves to the right, then follows the links between images—a lion stepping on the tail of a dragon biting the tail of a phoenix, etc. But the path taken by the mind's eye is more eversive than the one it would take through a sequence of discreet backgrounds. When Guyon enters the garden, the narrator first points out the "siluer seat" of Proserpina standing "in the midst" of the garden, and then the "goodly tree" that stands "next thereunto" (2.7.53.2-6). From there, the narration moves to the tree's branches bearing golden apples at the end, an image into which the poet condenses a number of classical stories. We don't know if Guyon himself thinks of these stories, but he certainly zeroes in on the tree, the shape of which leads his eye to other sights:

> The warlike Elfe much wondred at this tree,
> So faire and great, that shadowed all the ground,
> And his broad braunches, laden with rich fee,
> Did stretch themselues without the vtmost bound
> Of this great gardin, compast with a mound,
> Which ouer-hanging, they themselues did steepe,
> In a blacke flood which flow'd about it round;
> That is the riuer of Cocytus deepe,
> In which full many soules do endlesse waile and weepe. (2.7.56)

Guyon's wonder at the tree activates the narrator to follow its branches farther, "without the vtmost bound" of the garden itself, which we're now told is "compast with a mound." Laden with the golden apples, the branches droop past this mound and touch the river Cocytus. The arrangement of the space thus constitutes a visual metonymic chain—chair, tree, branch, apple, river—that leads Guyons's gaze out of the garden entirely. Once his eyes have followed the tree past the boundary of the garden, his feet follow:

> Which to behold, he clomb vp to the banke,
> And looking downe, saw many damned wights,
> In those sad waues, which direfull deadly stanke,

[129] Redcrosse too wanders into an open space located perplexingly inside the House of Holiness: the Mount of Contemplation, from which he can see the entire world and the world beyond (1.10.46–67). Much could be said about the House of Holiness as a memory-place, but this must await a future project.
[130] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 167.

Plonged continually of cruell Sprights,
That with their pitteous cryes, and yelling shrights,
They made the further shore resounden wide. . .
(2.7.57.1-6)

Now he sees into a new memory-place containing new memory-images: people in emblematic poses to whom exemplary stories of sin are attached. (It is telling that Guyon's attention is drawn to them not by their cries, which are loud enough to make "the further shore resound," but by visually tracking the tree's branches.) The Cocytus, though, is a memory-place like no others in the House. It is not merely adjacent to the garden in the parataxis of memory-places but also constitutes a second border *around* the garden that the mound partially conceals. Like the "wide wastfull ground" Guyon had been traveling through before meeting Mammon, the river is both a place of its own and a species of the non-space between places. Guyon keeps discovering more outsides, more beyonds, that invert the treasure-enclosing spaces of the House into expanding concentric circles.

The spatial confusion of this part of the House reflects our difficulty in assigning definite topic headings, which becomes apparent as soon as Guyon looks into the river. The first figure he sees occupies a zone of contact between it and the garden: Tantalus, whom Guyon "by chaunce espi[es]" (2.7.57.8) in the capricious manner of mnemonic associations:

Deepe was he drenched to the vpmost chin,
Yet gaped still, as coueting to drinke
Of the cold liquor, which he waded in,
And stretching forth his hand, did often thinke
To reach the fruit, which grew vpon the brincke:
But both the fruit from hand, and floud from mouth
Did flie abacke, and made him vainely swinke. . .
(2.7.58.1-7)

Tantalus lies right on the boundary between garden and river, but he can reach neither apple nor water to consume them, so although as an object in space he links the two memory-places, he is excluded by both. He must somehow relate the topics of the garden and the river to one another—but only by virtue of the fact that *he himself* can't incorporate the contents of those places. He is a little node of spatial inversion in this already-inverted place: trapped by both places but enclosed by neither and incapable of being filled himself, as if the underworld is turning inside out to expel him. Indeed, Tantalus problematizes the very idea of temperance as self-containment. The Garden of Proserpina, with its invitations to bodily ease and in particular to the satisfaction of hunger, is all about bad or dangerous consumption, which is central to Guyon's self-containment model, but Tantalus is associated with this idea in an indeterminate way. He was punished by the gods either for serving *them* a blasphemous meal or for betraying their confidences at *their* table. Spenser's syntax—"Of whom high Ioue wont whylome feasted bee"—merely aggravates that ambiguity. Is Tantalus here for bad eating or for bad serving? (The ambiguity itself suggests mnemonics' disregard for syntax and negation.) Either way, although eating is involved, his crime is more about blasphemy than intemperance, and his transgression of reasonable limits, whether of moderation or of divine law, has little to do with self-control, which is Guyon's main concern. In other

words, Tantalus has not merely failed to uphold reason's sovereignty over the body, he has transgressed limits exterior to his own self-regulation.

Tantalus leads Guyon's eye into the river and thence to a figure who is even more problematic: Pilate. Critics have never reached any consensus on the relationship between these two figures or what exactly they have to do with temperance, and by now this should not surprise us, since we are now fully immersed, as it were, in what was only supposed to be a border. And if Tantalus lay on the border of that border, Pilate belongs to it fully—he is "in" a place that should not be a place, is in fact up to his neck in it. Guyon does at first stumble over what Tantalus has to do with temperance, but once Tantalus tells him why he is being punished, Guyon manages to moralize him as an emblem of intemperance after all. He cannot pull off the same trick with Pilate. Pilate has no clear relation to intemperance—but (like Tantalus) he *is* a blasphemer. Indeed, his blasphemy took the form of a bad judgment: not a *failure* but an *error* of reason originating in his lack of mercy toward Christ. Pilate's presence here upsets everything Guyon thinks he knows about temperance. Pilate doesn't confirm the centrality of reason to virtue, he is a monster of reason untempered by grace, making him a demonic double of the Palmer whose notion of temperance rests on denial, pitilessness, and the avoidance of contamination.[131] Tantalus asks for pity, which elicits a pitiless condemnation from Guyon, but when Pilate confesses his crime, Guyon has nothing to say. Pilate has rendered a verdict on temperance itself that Guyon, from his position of knowledge, can't reconcile. In one sense, Guyon has wandered "out" of the places of temperance, but that outside is already inside, and the same mnemonic chain that linked the enclosed rooms of the House led straight to it.

If we have pieced together the links in that chain all the way out to Pilate, we know that Pilate's immersed figure mirrors Guyon's watching from the shore: just as Pilate washed his hands of Christ's blood, Guyon refuses to sully his hands by sacrificing his spectatorial distance. For Guyon to recognize this, though, he *would* have to immerse himself—and if he did, Mammon would win. The knowledge gathered in this place can't be articulated in the terms set by the House—but it is still there, in the form of absences. If we follow the chain *back* from Pilate to solid ground, we reach the golden fruit, which condenses a number of classical allusions under a single image: Hercules' apples in the garden of the Hesperides; the golden ball thrown by Hippomenes to distract Atalanta; the fruit whereby Acontius, like Hippomenes, tricked his wife into marriage; and then to the apple of Discord, thrown amongst three goddesses by an offended fourth. Several themes weave these allusions together: pursuit of worldly good (Hercules and Atalanta); trickery between lovers (Hippomenes and Acontius); and offenses against the gods (Discord, as well as Atalanta and Hippomenes, who were destroyed by the gods for desecrating an altar). Tracing these themes, however, cannot help but draw our attention to the most

[131] A. S. P. Woodhouse argues that Guyon's function in the poem deliberately excludes "the order of grace" and that "whatever touches Guyon bears [only] upon natural ethics, or belongs to the order of nature." I would argue that he would have to ignore the episode with Pilate in order to make the following claim: "Fortified by the practice of temperance and continence, Guyon comes to the Castle of Alma, not for correction, and not to receive a vision of higher things, but simply that he may understand more fully the humanistic ethic which has been his guiding principle from the beginning and which will suffice him to the end" ("Nature and Grace in 'the Faerie Queene,'" *ELH* 16, no. 3 [1949]: 204–6). To the contrary, Pilate shows Guyon precisely how his ethics will not suffice him, and his inability to respond to Pilate's message might explain why nothing especially transformative happens to him in the Castle of Alma.

obvious and yet unacknowledged allusion attached to the fruit: the fruit in the Garden of Eden. That apple doesn't appear in the narrator's genealogy of golden fruits; only we can "see" it. But, like the question of grace that hovers around Pilate, the Biblical apple has everything to do with Guyon—Guyon, who thinks he can refuse an apple that has already been eaten, who thinks he can be free from the frailty and stains of mortal flesh.[132]

Whether he likes it or not, Guyon's "just say no" policy can't free him from the labyrinth of forces that have shaped him—but the House also gives him no viable way of saying yes. The unspoken allusion to the fall of man is not the only conspicuous absence in the garden—there is Proserpina herself, who also said yes to a fruit and wound up married to the god of death. Absence seems to characterize the garden in general against the false plenitude of earlier parts of the House, and these absences invite Guyon in, like Proserpina's empty chair. But the chair is a trap, like the fruit itself had been for Proserpina, and sitting in it would force Guyon to remain in Mammon's House forever—a fate shared by Pirithous, a suitor of Proserpina who entered the underworld and was stuck to his seat for the transgression of desiring a god's wife. Condensed in the chair, tree, and fruit are two stories that would identify Guyon (should he sit in it) with both Proserpina *and* her suitor, the one tempted by mortal needs and the other punished for blasphemy. There would, then, be no way for Guyon to sit in the chair without copping to one sin or the other. The voids and absent allusions that give the lie to the House's promise of making all knowledge present might be apparent enough to us, but Guyon, for all his miraculous vision and privileged perspective, has no way of seeing through the lie. He is quite literally in an impossible place.

Britomart in the House of Busirane

If the House of Mammon promised Guyon access to a totality of knowledge as ahistorical and possessible, the House of Busirane offers Britomart the opposite: a conceptual universe composed of nothing *but* images that exert irresistible force upon their viewer regardless of whether they are images *of* anything in the object-world. The House of Mammon offers a fantasy that knowledge is object-like, collectible, without history. By contrast, the memory-place Britomart negotiates contains illusions that only come into being for the observer—images *as such,* with no guarantee of a pre-existing object-world to generate them. Both Britomart and the narrator construct the House of Busirane's contents in the act of seeing them with no mediating figure like Mammon to authorize one construction over another.[133] There is no implicit consensus between Busirane and Britomart, no sense that Britomart is walking through a gallery of things

[132] I owe this idea of the unarticulated allusion to Adam McKeown, "Looking at Britomart Looking at Pictures," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 45, no. 1 (2005): 43–63.

[133] We can attribute no particular authority to the narrator's description of Busirane's tapestries against which Britomart's response to them can be compared. As Leonard Barken argues in "Making Pictures Speak: Renaissance Art, Elizabethan Literature, Modern Scholarship," *Renaissance Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (1995): 326–35, the conventions of the *ut pictura poesis* tradition encourage the false belief that the subjects of an *ekphrasis* "have a prior existence independent of the poet, who is ostensibly merely 'describing' them." Even apart from such caveats, Spenser's description of Busirane's tapestries gives us very little information that could truly be called visual—but of course a description that faithfully adhered only to what could be seen as opposed to known about or extrapolated from a picture would be impossible for a reader to parse as a representation of a subject matter.

she already *knows.* But the House also claims its images are unauthored, its gallery of art objects representing a single story that is the natural, inevitable and objective history of desire—common knowledge that stays true whether Britomart consents to it or not. In reality, this history of desire does have a subject—a male subject—but it would like its reader to believe her subject-position doesn't exist so it can sustain its pretense of universality. And this, somewhat counterintuitively, is *why* she can move through it successfully and ultimately take control of the place's meaning. Guyon was seen by everyone in the House of Mammon, whereas Britomart sees but is not seen. She creeps through the House as we might through a funhouse, accosted by monsters that seem to direct their malevolent agency at us until we realize they are mechanical, performing at automatic intervals whether an audience is present or not. Once recognized, they can be stepped past.

The House of Busirane identifies itself as a memory-place by its structural logic: it is a series of rooms containing significant words and images, and progressing from one to the next somehow entails responding to these words and images. It is critical to understand it as a memory-place and not, as some critics have, as a "psychic space" that "projects" the fantasies of one or more of these characters. If that were true, whose mind, or whose psyche?[134] The House may be a mental space but it is not a *private* space—as a memory-place, it is where the individual "meets" the authors of commonly shared texts. Britomart in fact assumes the House to be a public space when she wonders why it's so empty. Medieval memory-training was an idiosyncratic activity that gave the scholar liberty to fashion his memorial edifices however he chose, but this does not mean it was what we would call psychological. To walk through the memory is to walk through literary history.

The House begins its campaign to represent its own illusions as natural and inevitable the moment Britomart walks through the entrance. In the first room, her attention is dominated by "goodly arras of great majesty," their images depicting portraits and deeds of love "As seemed by their semblaunt did entreat" (3.11.29.1-4). The pun in "entreat" suggests that the tapestry doesn't just "treat" the subject of love, it beckons or entices, or at least it seems to—inviting the spectator to participate? Or just to keep looking? The *ductus* of Busirane's authorship is suggested by the "discolourd Snake" of golden thread that runs through the tapestry, which

> lurked priuily,
> As faining to be hid from enuious eye;
> Yet here, and there, and euery where vnwares
> It shewd it selfe, and shone unwillingly.
> (3.11.28.4-7)

[134] Some read the House as a representation of Britomart's and/or Amoret's fearful erotic imaginations, which have been tyrannized by the conventions of Petrarchan love poetry. Thomas Roche famously called the House of Busirane "the objectification of Amoret's fears of marriage" and interpreted Britomart's rescue of her as a therapeutic intervention that frees Amoret to love Scudamour uninhibited by her feminine dread of sex. Later critics pointed out that this effectively blames Amoret for her own rape by explaining Busirane away as a figment of her inner conflicts. For Roche's view, see *The Kindly Flame: A Study of the Third and Fourth Books of Spenser's "Faerie Queene"* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 73–88; for a response to both Roche and feminist critiques of Roche, see Katherine Eggert, "Spenser's Ravishment: Rape and Rapture in 'The Faerie Queene,'" *Representations*, no. 70 (April 2000): 1–26.

And indeed, the narrator tells us the Ovidian stories represented in the tapestry as if reading a poem, taking it for granted that their temporal order is obvious in the picture and frequently relating action that could never be visually represented. The tapestry "ends" with an ambiguous visual epilogue:

> Kings Queenes, Lords Ladies, Knights and Damzels gent
> Were heap'd together with the vulgar sort,
> And mingled with the raskall rablement,
> Without respect of persons or of port,
> To shew Dan Cupids powre and great effort
> (3.11.46.1-5)

Does this stanza describe a pane at the far end of the tapestry, or does it summarize the whole thing, compressing the tales the narrator has just told us sequentially into a metaphorical "heap"? One could, after all, look at a tapestry either way: as discreet images ordered from left to right (or right to left), or as a simultaneous composition to be taken in all at once. The narrator manages to capture both modes while still mystifying what the thing actually looks like: if the "heap" is his way of summing up the rhetorical impact of the tapestry as a whole, then he suppresses the fact that one could not absorb that impact without looking at the images in some kind of sequence; but if the tapestry really does include a final pane showing a literal "heap" of Cupid's victims, then the narrator has "read" the tapestry in a way that forecloses alternative paths (and interpretive inferences) the viewer's eye could take—in short, constructing an argument that could be constructed any number of other ways. We have no way of knowing, of course, what Britomart is getting from this sight—but the narrator's description of the tapestry squares better with Busirane's probable intentions than Britomart's probably would. The final summarizing stanza concludes with what we could read as an affirmation of Busirane's message:

> And round about a border was entrayld,
> Of broken bowes and arrowes shiuered short,
> And a long bloudy riuer through them rayld,
> So liuely and so like, that liuing sence it fayld.
> (3.11.46.6-9)

The tapestry has literally been framed—although again, that framing occurs at a point in the narrative description less appropriate to the order in which one would notice pictorial elements than to the discursive order of an argument. We lose track of the tapestry as a woven thing while Ovid's stories are being narrated, and certainly the "border" reminds us that the tapestry is in fact a picture—but the "long bloudy river" flowing around the broken weapons seems to be real, replacing artifice with nature running its inevitable course. The river seems to answer the lurking golden thread, which exposed itself "unwillingly," but the broken weapons and river of blood, while similarly "entrayled" or interlaced, hide nothing.[135] Nature and authorial framing have by this point been thoroughly conflated.

The bloody river enclosing the tapestry's Ovidian images inside a "border" should remind us of the river that bordered the Garden of Proserpina, but only to highlight how

[135] Although blood's visual association with gold and gilding (see *Macbeth* 2.3.112) returns us to the tapestry's golden strands, and thus, of course, to "guilt"—an image-configuration that also dominates the House of Mammon and Guyon's quest in general.

differently they behave. Britomart does not physically wander in and out of this border like Guyon did, but it would be wrong to say she's more "distant" from the imagery than Guyon was. She's standing far enough away from the picture to see its inside and its border, but that doesn't make her the kind of disengaged spectator Guyon was, looking down from the embankment at the exemplary damned to judge them. The narrator may offer the characters in the picture to *our* judgment, but Britomart, whose reactions are hidden from us, doesn't appear to judge at all. She seems to stand apart from the very *question* of involvement and disengagement that Guyon's experience raised.

Once Britomart starts to search the House, she navigates the entire place the way Guyon navigated the garden: without a guide and with only the visual cues provided by the space itself to shape her direction. These features of the space, and not Busirane himself, generate the House of Busirane's *ductus.* This isn't to say Britomart moves freely. Rather, there is simply no way to tell what agency directs her. The House exposes Britomart to a spectacular multimedia demonstration of love's destructive power, combining tapestries, sculpture, bas-relief, and drama—all of which Britomart strides past as she finds her way to the secret chamber where Busirane is torturing Amoret. But the poem makes it very difficult to determine if Britomart gets to that chamber by reading, as it were, with the text or against it. For Guyon, reading against the text *is* reading with it—to reject is equivalent to acknowledging it—until he loses his guide and wanders into unauthorized areas. In the House of Busirane, we can't know when Britomart plays into Busirane's intent and when she does not. This is made even more ambiguous by whether she should try to *follow* Busirane's intent, as a trail that leads to him, or try *not* to follow it, assuming he's misdirecting her. Indeed, Busirane's objective is to seem as though he's not present at all, in body or in "intent." This ambiguity comes to a head in a riddle:

> Tho as she backward cast her busie eye,
> To search each secret of that goodly sted,
> Ouer the dore thus written she did spye
> Be bold: she oft and oft it ouer-red,
> Yet could not find what sence it figured.
> [...]
> But what so were therein or writ or ment,
> She was no whit thereby discouraged,
> From prosecuting of her first intent,
> But forward with bold steps into the next roome went.
> (3.11.50.1-5; 52.6-9)

Has she dismissed the motto, or has she enacted it by walking "with bold steps" through the very door the motto indicated? Britomart fails to ascertain the intent of the motto (what it "or writ or ment"), and so she reverts to her *own* "first intent" and keeps going "forward"—although presumably her movement has been inflected, whether she realizes it or not, by the motto. Her position is that of the reader who reads with no faith in the text's fixed meaning, or indeed no way to even engage with whatever meaning other readers, past or present, have attributed to it. But there's no way out, no way to *stop*

reading. She must rely, as a reader alienated from the culture that shapes her conditions, only on her own intent.[136]

The motto collapses the notion of authorial intent in another way. Much like the fruit in Proserpina's garden, the motto condenses multiple unrelated traditions under a single sign. As critics have pointed out, the phrase "be bold, be bold, be not too bold" has two possible sources: Arthur Golding's translation of the *Metamorphoses,* and a popular variation on the story of Bluebeard called Mr. Fox. In Golding's rendering of *Met*. 10.628-31, Venus encourages Adonis to "be bold on cowards"—that is, to pursue game that can only run away—but against fiercer game "forebeare too bold to be" (*Met*. 10.628-31). In the folktale, a young lady enters the house of one Mr. Fox and finds a door above which is written "Be bold, be bold, but not too bold, lest that your heart's blood should run cold." When she opens it, she discovers the murdered bodies of young women Mr. Fox has lured to his house, and later she exposes his guilt before the community. The meaning of "be bold, be bold, be not too bold" as it appears in the House of Busirane changes radically depending on the textual allusion one reads it through. The Ovidian one is better matched to Busirane's rhetorical ends, fitting as it does with the tapestries and other symbolic objects representing the destructive and adversarial nature of love. The folktale, however, as Mary Ellen Lamb notes, is a more feminine narrative, not only insofar as women were more likely to be familiar with the genre, but because the main female character has more agency. Like Britomart, she has a capacity for "boldness" and is celebrated for it.[137] These two allusions, however, do more than just stage a contest between two gendered discourses. In fact, Busirane's rhetorical deployment of the Ovid allusion alone has its own internal differences.[138] Iris Tillman Hill argues that Venus's distinction between the "soft hunt" of defenseless creatures and the "hard hunt" of creatures that can fight back contains a gendered irony that reinforces the opposition between the erotic and the chaste and therefore the definition of chastity exclusively as virginity. By encouraging Adonis to exercise boldness only in the pursuit of helpless victims, Venus tries to confine him to a feminized erotic sphere—her sphere—in which women are the passive objects of pursuit. Venus distinguishes her sphere sharply from the masculine sphere of Mars in which contest between equals takes place, thus ensuring that each gender has only one kind of "boldness" available to them, with the female kind (sexual forwardness) being equivalent to submission. In that sense, male and female boldness are incompatible, and female boldness and female chastity are mutually

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[136] Jeff Dolven frames Britomart's position within the House of Busirane in terms of relevance, arguing that her failure to understand the meaning of its words and pictures isn't so much a failure as it is symptom of misfit between rhetoric and audience. And yet, he points out, she unequivocally succeeds in passing through its dangers. "Perhaps this is the point," writes Dolven, "she succeeds precisely because she understands nothing, recognizes nothing, learns nothing. Instruction as it is represented in *The Faerie Queene* is always some kind of self-diagnosis or critique; readers in the poem are always reading about themselves. Understanding itself seems to be a disabling recognition of unfitness and impediment. The key to success, perhaps, is not reading at all" ("When to Stop Reading 'The Faerie Queene,'" in *Never Again Would Birds' Song Be the Same: Essays on Early Modern and Modern Poetry in Honor of John Hollander*, ed. Jennifer Lewin and John Hollander [New Haven: Beinecke Library, Yale University, 2002], 44).
[137] "Gloriana, Acrasia, and the House of Busirane: Gendered Fictions in 'The Faerie Queene' as Fairy Tale," in *Worldmaking Spenser: Explorations in the Early Modern Age*, ed. Patrick Cheney and Lauren Silberman, Studies in the English Renaissance (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2000), 97–99.
[138] Although she doesn't discuss the Ovidian reading of the motto, Lamb concludes at the end of her analysis that "women's narratives have won, hands down" (99).

exclusive. But to Britomart, the warlike champion of female chastity whose very name alludes to Mars, such a distinction is incoherent. Her character renders Busirane's ironic use of the word "bold" meaningless, and so the motto as he presumably intended it can exercise no rhetorical power over her.[139]

As an audience literally incapable of receiving Busirane's intended message, then, Britomart tends toward the other allusion embedded in the motto, the one Busirane did not foresee—although it is important to note that she does not recognize the allusion as such. Indeed, she doesn't seem to be reading for allusion at all.[140] Instead, she acts the allusion out: she goes through the door, she discovers the villain and his victim, and she stops his reign of terror. The allusion to Mr. Fox doesn't matter to anyone *in* the narrative—it only matters to us, the readers who can notice the narrative parallels. Britomart, in what we might call a moment of female narrative appropriation, does not defeat Busirane's defenses by interpreting anything. But she also doesn't she *fail* to interpret. She operates on a level beyond interpretation, as her very act of walking through the door, guided by her "first intent," reconfigures the literary references contained in the motto to render one of its senses active and the other meaningless. This is only possible because of who she *is,* the kind of subject she is—by being the unanticipated union of Venus and Mars,[141] she need only step into the crosstides of the poem's metonymic drift to arrange its elements into a new composition. Britomart does not stand on a shore and listen to stories, she's *in* the story.

Britomart's participation in that story depends on a kind of blindness—by immersing herself in the action, she sacrifices the spectatorial position Guyon enjoyed—but this lack of perspicacity in fact helps her navigate the House's illusions. The House of Busirane, like the House of Mammon, does its best to limit the directional choices of its visitors, but Britomart moves contrary to the *ductus* the House tries to shape for her. For instance, if we define a memory-place as an isolated spectacle that gathers materials on a common theme, the House contains many—the tapestry, the shrine of Cupid, the bas-reliefs and trophies, and the masque—but if we pay attention, we learn that this division of the House into discrete places is part of its illusion. The tapestry and the shrine of Cupid in fact occupy a single room, and the masque takes place in the same room that contains the bas-reliefs and trophies so that once a day, the empty gallery turns into a stage. The House also appears at first to be more labyrinthine than it is. When Britomart enters the second room, she seems to have a myriad of directional choices, but in fact there are only two doors: the one she came through and the one at the opposite end where the masque emerges from. Mnemonically speaking, these are all separate "places," but what at first appear to be spatial boundaries are in fact temporal ones. Britomart figures out this trick of the House when the door won't open for her: thwarted spatially, she sits down and waits. By that act—or rather, refusal to act as directed—she effectively circumvents the House's spatial limitations. She moves in a way the House did not intend.

Britomart's power over the House has everything to do with movement, of the body but also of affect. Busirane's illusions *do* affect her, but not as they were meant to—

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[139] Iris Tillman Hill, "Britomart and 'Be Bold, Be Not Too Bold,'" *English Literary History* 38, no. 2 (1971): 173–87.

[140] In fact, we are told in 3.11.50.5 that she is reading for the "figured sense," which, whatever that is, certainly isn't the same as detecting allusions.

[141] We might also add Diana, and maybe even Pallas Athena.

they do not induce belief. At the end of her vigil, an apparent spatial inversion like the one at the center of Mammon's House occurs—Britomart hears the outdoor sounds of a distant battle and an approaching storm, and feels an earthquake—but by waiting them out, she learns they're stage illusions. This is not to say she ignores them. She responds to the trumpets, for instance, not because she believes an army is coming but simply because they indicate that *something* is coming, something in this place is about to change:

> She heard a shrilling Trompet sound aloud,
> Signe of nigh battell, or got victory;
> Nought therewith daunted was her courage proud,
> But rather stird to cruell enmity,
> Expecting euer, when some foe she might descry.
> (3.12.1.5-9)

She doesn't leap to her feet and prepare for battle, she reacts to the trumpet as she does to many another "signe" in the house: with a feeling. Her courage's "cruell enmity" isn't directed at the unseen army specifically; she's simply long been in a state of "expecting euer" for the time when something will appear that she can act against. Similarly, she waits through the apocalyptic storm, earthquake and smoke that follow, "emmou'd" but not moving. When the iron door opens and Ease emerges "as on the ready flore / of some Theatre," we realize that Britomart's vigil was the vigil of an audience waiting for a play, and her reactions to the special effects—inward feeling without outward action—were entirely appropriate for a theatrical spectacle. She disappears from the narration for a while as the masque is narrated, and only after its actors have returned behind the door do we learn what she has been doing:

> Then the braue Maid, which all this while was plast,
> In secret shade, and saw both first and last,
> Issewed forth, and went vnto the dore,
> To enter in, but found it locked fast:
> It vaine she thought with rigorous vprore
> For to efforce, when charmes had closed it afore.
> (3.12.27)

She has seen the whole thing, neither as audience nor as participant but as potentially either—she sees it from offstage, as it were, "plast / in secret shade." Once the performance has ended, she steps onto the stage, "issew[ing] forth" as Ease had done (3.12.3.5), but against the direction of the actors—following their movement, but moving *against*. She didn't attend to the content of the masque, to the authorial intentions the narrator spent so many cantos explicating to us, but she paid plenty of attention to the masque figures themselves because they gave her information about *where to go*. She steps onto the stage and enters the action—not to be absorbed into the story as a character, but as a performer who knows how stage machinery works. Indeed, she is announced as an artist by her attempts to open the charm-locked door by "sleights and art." When that doesn't work, she settles in to wait for the next show—attending not to the story but to the performance, seeing its "intent" only so she can move upstream against it.

Britomart does a great deal of looking in the House of Busirane, and we are told very little of how the sights affect her, but they never distract her. Even when she spends

the day after the first performance of the masque "gazing on that Chambers ornament," she seems to be doing it just to kill time, and we're given no sign that anything has changed for her when the day ends and the door opens. Britomart, in other words, seems to be the reader-gazer Protestants don't think exists, one immune to idolatry, affected by what she perceives but not automatically convinced.[142] Because in the end, there's nothing to be convinced *of.* She often looks for the "intent" of the absent author, but because that author radically does not address her, she doesn't find it—and this allows her to move forward, to interpret "be bold, be bold, be not too bold" not according to the intention of its author but purely as a directional signal, significant only in how it affects *her* intent. Her attention seems to settle on the door marked "be not too bold," after all, simply because the motto above it differs from the others in the room.

Britomart completes her dismantling of Busirane's misogynistic tradition not through argument but through literary parody. When the door to the inner chamber finally opens, Britomart storms into the midst of an infernal, gender-swapped Petrarchan scene. In Petrarch's "Triumph of Love," Cupid celebrates a victory representing the poet's succumbing to love for Laura, and in the poem that follows it, a white-clad Chastity celebrates the victory of Laura's chastity over the poet's love by binding Cupid to a pillar and parading him through the streets. In Busirane's inner sanctum, Spenser makes a number of substitutions for the elements in Petrarch's poems: Amoret for Amor (Cupid); a brazen pillar for the jasper one Cupid was bound to; an iron chain for Cupid's silver-and-diamond one; and the monstrous Busirane for Chastity. Busirane is chastity as "chastening," instruction through pain, and so when Britomart bursts in, she steps into his role to become what we might read as the figure of True Chastity—that is, the new form of chastity that only Britomart's presence can bring into being. She puts a stop to chastity's torturing of erotic love by freeing Amoret and parading a captive Busirane before them both, a further imitation of Petrarch that recasts his Chastity and Eros as false versions of the true virtues Britomart and Amoret represent.

This is where we might note, however, the limits of Britomart's victory. For one thing, she can't help but establish what may be a new tyranny—her triumph over Busirane does, after all, set up a new status quo vulnerable to same process of creative misreading, a True Chastity whose claims to truth must necessarily be as false as Busirane's. The frozen hermaphroditic figure of Amoret reunited with Scudamour suggests just such a problematic stasis—or even regression, since the comparison of their embrace to that of Hermaphroditus and Salmacis returns us to an Ovidian model of love as captivity and defeat. Britomart does, after all, end Busirane's spells by reversing them and not by radically destroying them. As Greene says, any revolution within a literary tradition must take place within bounds set by the tradition itself, and in Spenser's poem, all of the forces that allowed the new to emerge seem equally to pull the new thing back, toward the old configurations from which it emerged. Indeed, the poet compares Scudamour and Amoret not even to Ovid's characters themselves but to a marble statue made by a (as far as we know entirely fictional) "rich Romane"—as if Spenser were rewriting literary history to locate this novel invention in the same past that produced Busirane. The union that is also a severing—Ovid's Hermaphroditus complains that he

[142] For the frankly vast topic of idolatry in The Faerie Queene, see in particular Kenneth Gross, *Spenserian Poetics: Idolatry, Iconoclasm, and Magic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986); and Gilman, *Iconoclasm and Poetry in the English Reformation*.

has been made "half a man"—dominates the end of the canto as well, in the "perfect hole" of Amoret's closed wound, in Britomart "halfe enuying" the couple's bliss as their wholeness reminds her of her own incompleteness—and of course, in the 1596 edition's undoing of Book 3's closing union. Spenser's reopening of his poem's "perfect hole" suggests that any true attempt at a new composition commits the author to an "endlesse worke." If the limits of Guyon's self-containment-based virtues were answered by Britomart's quest to reconcile virginity with sociality, the model of chaste erotic love that Britomart makes possible must give way to later developments, as the poem, like history itself, pursues a quest that has no goal.

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